THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9 April, 1927 Number 4

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Notes of the Month
THE BRITISH IMPERIALIST OFFENSIVE

Trade Unions and the Law
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ERNST TOLLER

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NOTES of the MONTH

Three Fronts—Troops in China—Offensive Plan—Imperialist Responsibility—The Soviet Note—Reasons for Delay—Chamberlain's War Aims—Die-Hards and Moderates—Plan of Campaign—United Front Against—Social Democracy's Rôle—Preparing the War—A French Testimony—A Swedish Example—MacDonald and Chamberlain—"Foreign" Interference—International Socialism—British "Interference" in India—The Soviet's Crime—"Soviet versus Civilisation"—The Home Fight—Making Communism Illegal—Splitting Campaign—Communism the Heart of the Fight—The Left Wing—The Single Front

THE British Government's offensive of 1927 is developing in a complicated situation. Three fronts are involved. The first is China. The second is the Soviet Union. The third is the British Labour Movement. It is the peculiarity of the present situation that the Conservative Government has formally proclaimed its offensive against all three at once. The provocative movement of the troops in China, the Note to the Soviet Union and the subsequent League Council proceedings, and the projected legislation against the Trade Unions are all developing simultaneously. What is the actual first point of attack and the line of campaign? This is the question of the moment. It is clear that the fullest vigilance of the working-class movement is needed to meet the attack in whatever forms it may further develop.

IN the forefront of immediate concentration is the already begun military offensive against China. The troops in Shanghai have been used, immediately on arrival, to shield a barbarous terror against the Shanghai Trade Unions, on a scale never attempted before the arrival of the British troops, and carried out with the open assistance and co-operation of the International

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Settlement authorities and police. (This dropping of the thin veneer of civilisation by the Western Imperialist exploiters as soon as their interests are really threatened should open the eyes of the Western workers to the real character of the fight in front.) The stationing of the interventionist forces on a twenty-one-mile front in Chinese territory well beyond the Settlement area with explicit instructions to resist the advance of the Chinese National Army "by all means at their disposal" (what has happened to MacDonald's pledge of January 21 that there was "no intention whatever" of using the troops against the Canton Army under any circumstances, but only against the "danger of crowds"? —*Daily Herald*, January 21, 1927) is already the first expression of what is equivalent to an offensive military plan.

IT is significant that the other Powers, apart from Italy's fifty men, have so far ostentatiously refused to take part in the British line, and have publicly instructed their forces to confine their rôle to defence: the United States marines "will be used to protect American life and property, but not to resist the regular Chinese forces" (*The Times*, March 3). This division within imperialism may disappear if a crisis develops; but so far it is equivalent to a propagandist declaration by the other Powers in their own interests that they regard the British policy as an offensive policy. British Imperialism is determined to fight, if necessary, from the base of Shanghai; to hold Shanghai in effective control, under whatever form (even though the Nationalists should enter Shanghai), at all costs; and from this base either to force a settlement with Moderate Nationalism by mingled coercion and promises, or, if this fails, to enter on an aggressive campaign up the Yang-tse. In the words of *The Times* correspondent in the beginning of February:—

> Let us stand by Shanghai, protect our own and the Chinese interests already centred there for security, and let us continue to make concessions to Nationalism, and hope that Shanghai will come to be the rallying point for those moderate elements through whom alone sanity can be restored to this country. (*The Times*, February 3, 1927.)

Here is as definite a counter-revolutionary policy as any Archangel or Kolchak intervention in Russia. And this policy is being

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conducted by the British Conservative Government with armed forces, guns, tanks, and cruisers at the very same time as it is sending notes of protest to the Soviet Union against interference in the affairs of other countries! This is the actual aggressive action of imperialism all over the world which is condoned and defended by the Labour Front Benchers, who hold up their hands in horror at international Communist propaganda.

HAD it not been for the British "Defence Force" in Shanghai, it is manifest that the National forces would have already long ago been in peaceful occupation of the city, and the disorderly rout of bandit forces maintained by British subsidies (not least by the surtaxes so magnanimously conceded in the December Note) would have been completely dissolved. It is notorious that Chang, in the North, the final obstacle to Chinese unity and emancipation, has only been maintained by the subsidies and equipment of successive imperialist groups; and it is rumoured that he has only entered on his present campaign after very heavy inducement from British sources. The Conservative Press correspondents have themselves testified to the horror and hatred of the whole population for the mercenary anti-Nationalist forces with their looting and banditry. Every competent observer has confirmed the view that, if the imperialist maintenance and subsidising of these forces were removed, the National cause would overrun the whole of China without a struggle in a very short time. The civil war has been literally the creation of the imperialists, who since 1911 have fought the Chinese revolution and prevented Chinese unity by these means. The principal obstacle still to the final organisation of Chinese unity and freedom is British Imperialism with its guns and subsidies. This is the real meaning of the sending of the "Defence Force," under cover of talk of defending a handful of thousands of British lives, not one of which has ever been in danger, to the complete exclusion of consideration of the four hundred million Chinese, whose lives and vital interests are endangered, and thousands upon thousands of whom have already in the last few years been massacred by British guns.

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IN the midst of this Chinese campaign has come the complication of the Note to the Soviet Union. What is the object of this Note, and what action does it foreshadow? It is manifest that to engage a simultaneous full offensive against China and the Soviet Union at once, without any basis of certainty of the ground yet in either case so as to be able to concentrate on a single front, would be to commit an elementary error of strategy, of which British bourgeois policy, with its circuitous opportunism until the favourable striking moment arrives, is seldom guilty. It is therefore probable that there is some measure of correctness in the reports which attribute the Note to the pressure of the extreme Right "Die-Hard" elements upon the Government, and that the Note is a half-way concession to these elements. In so far as this is correct, it is a favourable sign, despite the immediate dangers raised. It means that an increasing section of the British bourgeoisie is losing its head at the dangers of Communism and revolution seen by them on every side—that is, at the growing dilemmas and crises of British capitalist decline—and is reaching the point of wishing to strike out blindly in every direction at once, without calculation of consequences. But it must always be remembered that the extreme "Anti-Red" "Die-Hards" are not yet the Government, which is pursuing a much more dangerous policy along the traditional lines of British diplomacy and imperialism. In this policy the Note to the Soviet Union is also able to have its place, as a propagandist preparation, foreshadowing future but not immediate action, and providing the occasion for any sudden rupture at a later point to give it the appearance of long-protracted preparation and "patience."

WHAT the Note to the Soviet Union clearly shows is that the will to strike is already fully present and unconcealed so soon as the favourable occasion presents itself. The Note is a Note of war-preparation, not of the diplomatic settlement of difficulties. It explicitly excludes discussion or negotiation. The charges are not practical issues, but bear the character of a compiled and unconvincing "case." But if this is the sentiment, what is the reason for postponing a break?

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Pressed on this point by the "Die-Hards," Chamberlain could only answer that the "imponderables" of the international situation had to be taken into account. What these "imponderables" are is clear enough to all. In 1925, pressed on the same point for a rupture with the Soviet Union, Chamberlain answered that "it would complicate domestic issues." This was in June, 1925, on the eve of Red Friday, when the attack on the miners and the working class was due to come. Owing to the strength of the Left forces in the working class, this attack took longer than expected, and absorbed the main attention of the Government for a year and a half. During this period the Locarno policy had to hang fire and the China situation be left to develop. Only with the beginning of this year has the Government felt free again to concentrate on its international policy. And this time, in 1927, the loudly demanded rupture with the Soviet Union is again held up, this time by the "imponderables" of the international situation. In other words, the China crisis must be mastered first; and the anti-Soviet coalition in Europe has still to be completely built up.

WHAT Chamberlain said in detail even more clearly indicates the dominant policy of the Government. He said, answering the question of why no immediate action was proposed:—

> A breach between us and Soviet Russia . . . *if taken suddenly* or before the world saw what was the provocation, what was the inevitability of it, and before the world was in a position to place the responsibility—*as the responsibility will lie whenever this comes about*—on the right shoulders . . . to act before we had given time for the evidence to become clear would have had a very disturbing effect upon the European situation.

This statement is the statement of a man solely concerned with the diplomatic preparation of a war. The coming war with the Soviet Union is assumed: the only problem is the correct preparation of "war-responsibility." The statement bears an ominously similar ring in its actual phrasing to the statements of Baldwin and Churchill in 1925 defending the subsidy and Red Friday as preparation for May 1 ("if they were going to embark on a struggle of this kind, let them be quite sure that decisive public opinion was behind them," "if such an issue should ever

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have to be brought to a head, public opinion would have to be educated into a state of preparedness to accept the consequences," &c.). In the same tone Snowden, who had already been quoted by Chamberlain with complete approval in his own support, echoed Chamberlain when he said:—

> Let him make another effort to try to settle the questions, and *if he failed, then he would have a much stronger case* than he had to-day to ask the House to break off relations.

The preparation of the "case" for the future war on the Soviet Union as completely obsesses the language and expression of the Foreign Office to-day as the building up of the anti-Soviet coalition dominates its diplomatic actions.

IT is solely from the complicated character of the situation that follows the division within the Conservative ranks between the "moderates" and the "Die-Hards." The division does not represent any division in class-hatred and enmity to the Soviet Union and to the working class, which is equally clear and conscious in either case. The difference is only the difference between a blind desire for immediate action, and a conscious, calculating policy, which endeavours to take all the factors into account and to prepare the ground for effective action. The change-over of Sir Robert Horne, the original negotiator of the Trade Agreement, from moderation to extremism illustrates this. Speaking in Glasgow, he explained that he had negotiated the Trade Agreement because "he felt that no Communistic organisation could ultimately prevail against the necessities of trading with individualistic nations, and he thought that the sooner commercial relations were established between Russia and the outside world the sooner would the Russian people appreciate the desirability of conforming to the ways of the rest of civilised mankind." That is to say, he consciously regarded the Trade Agreement as a means, direct armed intervention having failed, of undermining Communism in Russia by subtler weapons. But in this he had to confess himself disappointed: "there was probably no person in the island more disappointed than he." The power of the Communist Government in Russia, and the work of socialistic construction, has not been broken by the subtler weapons of foreign trade and capitalist hopes of pene-

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tration any more than by direct armed intervention; against the Workers' State Monopoly as against an impenetrable wall the capitalist sappers have come to grief. Hence the return to the policy of direct rupture and armed war, as illustrated in Sir Robert Horne's conversion. But Sir Robert Horne's conversion and new war-propagandist zeal is no news for the Foreign Office. For the Foreign Office the question has already long been, not whether, but how.

IF the China crisis can be mastered—if, that is to say, either a settlement can be effected with Moderate Nationalism which will safeguard imperialism against the Left, that is, against the Chinese workers and peasants; or if at any rate a check can be established to the National advance and a definite partition of China between North and South established—then the full concentration on the Soviet Union is likely to follow. But even then the preparation in Europe has to be completed. Poland has been secured by the suitably engineered revolution of last May (the Conservatives have no hesitation at engineering revolutions in other countries when it suits their purpose), and Lithuania by the more recent coup. But the Baltic bloc is not yet stably secured, as the Soviet-Latvian Agreement has shown, short of further coups to cover Latvia and Finland; and while Germany has been slowly won over with liberal offers to recognise its obligations to take part in the future League of Nations' war for "civilisation," the elements of opposition, both Nationalist and working class, are very strong, representing the majority of the nation (the ratification of Locarno was opposed by party votes representing the majority of the electorate); and the German-Polish differences have still to be settled, a task to which the last League Council has been devoted. Finally, the reaction of the working class in Britain and Western Europe is still a doubtful factor, despite the zealous efforts of the Second International leaders to stir up anti-Russian feeling; and in particular, the opposition of the British working class may assume dangerous proportions, especially if an attack on Trade Union rights is taking place at the same time. For this reason it is likely that the home attack will be moderated, and every effort made to draw the leadership into "agreed"

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reforms, or, failing this, then by withdrawal on some of the more aggressive issues and unexpected concessions and readiness to make changes on others, to create an atmosphere of "reasonableness."

IN this situation it is obviously the policy of the working class to maintain the maximum unity along the whole front. If only effective and unbreakable unity between the British working class, Chinese Nationalism, and the Soviet Union can be maintained, on the basis of a clear recognition of common interests, then the whole attack of British Imperialism must fall to the ground. The resistance of the miners to the British bourgeoisie facilitated the advance of Chinese Nationalism. To-day the advance of Chinese Nationalism is lessening the force of the otherwise inevitable attack on the Trade Unions in Britain. The support of the Soviet workers to the miners can and will receive no less solidarity from the British working class in the hour of common trial and attack on the Soviet Union. The ties which united the Soviet workers and the British workers against intervention in 1920 have grown a hundredfold stronger in the seven years' common experience since then. There could be no greater mistake than to suppose that the carefully prepared plans of the Imperialists must necessarily take their course. Just as their plans of intervention in the past were defeated, just as their plans of carving up China into concessions for the different powers have been wrecked, so to-day their plans can be checked and broken in the early stages by the strength of agitation and opposition, and by the solidarity of the forces against them. Even the limited opposition forced from below on to the Labour Party front bench leaders in relation to China has hampered the development of the full aggressive designs. If this limited opposition could be turned into active fraternisation with Chinese Nationalism and agitation of the whole force of the Labour Movement for the recall of the troops and the stoppage of further war supplies, it would not only check the designs on China, but it would also break the attack on the Soviet Union and break the whole force of the attack on the Trade Unions in view of the new crisis that would result in the Chinese situation. It is the whole

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key to working-class policy in the present period to grasp the meaning of this single front.

THE aim of the Government is to divide the working-class and revolutionary forces arrayed against them. Just as on the home front they seek to divide the workers along sectional lines of craft or industry, so on the international front they seek to divide the workers along national lines, to appeal to common "British" interests "without distinction of class" against the Chinese, against the Russians, &c. And it is here that the rôle of the reformist leaders and of Social Democracy comes in —to break up the workers' ranks on behalf of the Government, to support the Government's pleas, to oppose class unity and international unity, to divide the British workers from the Soviet workers, to play on sectional feeling against common working-class needs at home, to play on national prejudice against international "interference" in world issues. An examination of the rôle of the Second International and the Amsterdam International since their inception will show that in every crisis which has taken place, throughout all their utterances and expressions (there are no actions to examine), this rôle has been the same, of dividing the workers, opposing international unity, and supporting imperialist diplomacy. This rôle now reaches its highest point in the preparation of the campaign against the Soviet Union.

THREE principal crises have dominated the present period since the closing of the era of pacifist-democratic illusions of 1924. The first has been the General Strike of last year, with its long preparation, and the now following attack on the Trade Unions and the Left Wing. The second is the Chinese struggle which is still in full swing. The third is the attack on the Soviet Union which is still in preparation. In all of these the rôle of the reformist leaders has been so clear that no worker can fail to see it. In the General Strike they opposed beforehand the long struggle for international unity and class unity in preparation; they opposed preparations; in the struggle itself they separated the miners from the other workers, and surrendered the working-class issue of no reductions for the Government policy of lower wages.

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The Amsterdam International and the Miners' International prevented international unity of action and acted as blacklegs, in defiance of their pledges. (It is a grim commentary on the Miners' International under Hodges and the reformists that, while American coal was used to break the British miners, the American miners' own wage agreement and a new demand for a 20 per cent. wage cut now comes due on April 1, and British coal is busily being ordered by the American owners in preparation.) In the threatened attack on the Trade Unions we have seen how the reformist leaders have already broken the ranks by joining up with the capitalist industrial peace campaign, and throwing out the suggestion of a Government "inquiry," as well as by conducting their own campaign of splitting and disfranchisement in the local labour parties and the Trade Unions, thus clearing the way for the Government attack. On the issue of China we have seen last month how they have performed their rôle by crying up the Government policy of "peace," warning the British workers against Chinese "mobs" and "firebrands," preventing working-class action to check the dispatch of troops, and thus becoming accessories in practice of the whole military interventionist policy in China. The same process is now visible in the preparation of the attack on the Soviet Union, and it is so vital a part of the whole offensive that it needs special examination.

RECENTLY the well-known French Socialist writer Augustin Hamon (the translator of Shaw) has found himself compelled to comment on the extraordinary rôle of French and German Social Democracy in relation to the campaign against the Soviet Union. He writes :—

> Everything that can be mobilised against the U.S.S.R. has been mobilised. And in this general mobilisation it is staggering to find German Social Democracy and the French Socialist Party.

So writes a Socialist witness. The surprise of M. Hamon need, however, have been less unbounded if the whole line of development of the so-called "Labour and Socialist International" since its foundation in 1923 is taken into consideration. The Kautsky Memorandum in favour of direct capitalist intervention, the

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support of Protocol and Pact with the obvious turning of the whole spearpoint against Russia, the rejection of the English amendment to exclude a war against Russia from the scope of the war obligations of the Protocol, the Marseilles Congress resolution on the danger of war owing to Russian military ambitions and the consequent necessity of self-protection by the Border States—all these form a single line leading up to the present campaign.

AT the present time the significance of Locarno and the League, and of the rôle of Social Democracy in relation to them, is well understood. An example may be taken from one of the typical parties of the Second International, the Swedish Social Democratic Party. A Naval Commission appointed by the last Social Democratic Government has reported, with the unanimous agreement of its Social Democratic and extreme militarist members, in favour of an extensive new building programme for the Swedish Navy. Why? The Swedish Navy in the Baltic is already 111 ships strong, whereas the whole Soviet Baltic Navy is only 75 ships (Swedish naval statistics). Swedish armaments expenditure has increased between 1920 and 1925, in the years of Locarno "peace," from 119 to 148 million kronen, or 24 per cent. Against whom? There is no doubt of the answer. As one of the leading Swedish Social Democratic journals writes :—

> If conflicts ensue in the East (*i.e.*, the Border States), the League of Nations and Russia will have occasion to measure their strength. In adhering to the Locarno policy Sweden has abandoned any possibility of maintaining its neutrality.

The meaning of the Locarno policy, and of the policy of Social Democracy, is here clearly set out, very much more clearly than in the British Labour Press, where pacifist dreams are still played with, despite the actual policy that is being conducted by the leaders of the movement. On this it is necessary to be absolutely clear. *The policy of Locarno and of the League of Nations is a policy of war. If the intended war on the Soviet Union takes place, it will be fought under the banner of the League of Nations*, in the name of international obligations, in the name of "civilisation" and of "peace": and the whole machine of Social Democracy will be turned to its service. For this the workers need to be prepared.

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THE most conspicuous feature in the House of Commons debate on the Note to the Soviet Union was the fact that MacDonald, entrusted by the Labour Movement with the task of opposition to the Government's policy, not only came out in complete support of Chamberlain's policy and the Chamberlain Note, but endeavoured to underline his position of solidarity with the capitalist outlook by declaring that he would have sent a stronger Note. "I am glad that the Foreign Secretary sent a Note to Russia. I think the Note was two years out of date. . . . If I had been in office a Note would have been sent a good long time before 1927. . . . I think it would have been stiffer in substance. We all agree with the proposition that no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs." Here is expressed the unity of the Second International with the policy of Chamberlain. The blind hatred of Bolshevism leads to a complete ignoring of the most elementary requirements of policy of the working-class movement. Once again is revealed the old obsession of appearing more anti-Bolshevik than the bourgeoisie themselves ("If I had been in office . . . it would have been stiffer," &c.) which led to the fall of MacDonald in 1924, and his ruinous handling and gullibility over the Zinoviev forgery, when his anti-Bolshevism made him the easy prey of the experienced Foreign Office officials. To satisfy his hatred of Bolshevism he allows it to appear that the whole official Labour Movement is committed to the support of the Chamberlain Note, so that Chamberlain is able to claim the "fundamental agreement" of all parties in his support, and to find the way made plain to the now no longer concealed ultimate policy of war. This is an issue so serious as to require the action and control of the whole Labour Party in Parliament. It is not sufficient to determine a policy; it is necessary to ensure that speeches shall conform to that policy.

ON what grounds does MacDonald justify his unity with Chamberlain against the Soviet Union, that is to say, with the centre of capitalist reaction against the centre of the Socialist fight and the working-class movement? The ground that he puts forward is the ground of opposition to the "interference" of "foreigners" in the nation's "own affairs." "We

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all agree that no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs." What is meant by this ? It is necessary to look into this plea with some care ; for it is common to all the Labour Party reformist leaders, as also to the General Council (refusal of the Russian workers' money, resentment at the Soviet Trade Union criticism, &c.). There is no question here of national independence against external coercion. There is no question of the Soviet Government proposing to send troops to establish Communism in Britain, as the British Government has in fact sent troops to endeavour to establish capitalism in Russia. What, then, is in question ? All that is in question is the propaganda activities of the Communist International, the propaganda, that is, of an international working-class organisation. The whole question at issue, in the words of every document, is a question of " propaganda." And the objection to this comes in the present case, not from the bourgeoisie (their objection is natural and understandable ; they object to all working-class propaganda of any kind ; and the right of working-class propaganda at home has only been won from them by the workers' own strength and sacrifice in the face of their stubborn opposition), but from a so-called representative of international Socialism ! It is disgraceful that it should even be attempted to raise a plea of this kind in the working-class movement.

IT is a long time since MacDonald, Snowden and their colleagues have ever had any contact with the propaganda and ideas of Socialism, and it may therefore be necessary to remind them of some of the elements of the Socialist Movement. In international Socialism there are no national barriers. There are no " foreigners " in the international working-class movement, but only workers in a common fight. Whatever contribution, discussion or criticism comes from any quarter within the working-class movement depends for its merit or demerit on its own worth to assist in the working-class fight, and not on whether it comes from a " foreign " source or otherwise. Three-quarters of a century ago these were the commonplaces of the Socialist Movement. At the present day, when international development and communications have advanced a hundredfold and interlocked the whole

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of world economic and political life in a thousand directions, to attempt to throw back the international proletariat to a narrow basis of "national" propaganda and development is not merely a reactionary relapse into bourgeois national Philistinism and a complete denial of Socialism, but is in fact to fall a hundred miles behind the modern bourgeoisie themselves. It is the ironical character of the modern Labour and Socialist "International" that, in contrast to the seventy years older First International of Marx, it has set up the principle of the "autonomy" of the national movements (that is, the mutual excuses and irresponsibility of the opportunist traitors in each country) which inevitably means the denial of any principle of international Socialism at all.

BUT indeed let us look at the plea a little closer. "We all agree that no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs." Indeed! Are "we" really all so agreed of this? In that case, what of India? Britain is certainly "a foreign country" in relation to India. But even MacDonald would be hard put to it to argue that Britain is not conducting a very considerable "interference" in the internal affairs of India, an "interference" that goes markedly beyond the sending of a fraternal delegate and a few leaflets, an "interference" that extends to eighty thousand troops, guns, tanks, Press Acts, Special Ordinances, prisons, gallows, bombing aeroplanes, an occasional Amritsar and a despotic administrative machine. Nevertheless there is no evidence that "we"—that is, MacDonald and Chamberlain—have ever denounced this as an "intolerable" state of affairs and sent out "stiff" demands for its immediate cessation. On the contrary, MacDonald as Prime Minister seemed to tolerate this system of interference in the internal affairs of another country very well, and, so far from opposing it, added whips and scorpions to the system in the shape of the Special Ordinances for imprisoning political offenders without trial; and when some simple Indians endeavoured to propagate the principle that "no country can tolerate the interference of a foreign country in its own affairs" in relation to India, they were promptly sentenced at Cawnpore to heavy terms of imprisonment, with MacDonald's explicit approval, for

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" disloyalty to the King-Emperor." So much for the honesty even of Mr. MacDonald's " national " principles. It is clear that he will tolerate any amount of " interference " so long as it is by the imperialist class he serves ; it is only when there is a question of working-class propaganda that his principles of national self-sufficiency rise up in him against it. *The gunboats of imperialism are approved ; it is only the leaflets of working-class propaganda that raise his indignation.* In other words, the question is a simple class question behind all the " national " trappings, and MacDonald is on the side of the capitalist class.

IN the debate on the same question of the Note to the Soviet Union in the House of Lords Lord Grey came a great deal nearer than MacDonald to the root of the matter. He said :—

> The Soviet Government was not in the ordinary sense a national Government at all. It was not a Russian Government in the sense in which the French Government was French or the German Government was German. The French and the German Governments, like our own Government, *existed to promote the interests of their own countries, and did not care about the interests of other countries except in so far as those interests might affect their own.*

The implication intended by Lord Grey that the Soviet Government " interferes " in other countries and the British and French Governments do not is of course completely false. The example of China shows clearly enough the difference between the gunboat policy of the imperialist Powers and the voluntary surrender of all imperialist rights and privileges by Soviet Russia, a difference that the Chinese have shown themselves quick to appreciate. But the essence of the matter is nevertheless unconsciously revealed in the illuminating expression of this typical exponent of the " civilised " bourgeois outlook. The British, &c., bourgeois Governments " existed to promote the interests of their own countries and *did not care about the interests of other countries*." Here is the bourgeois outlook in a nutshell. This is the individualism, the " each-for-himself-and-devil-take-the-hindmost," which is the basis and foundation of bourgeois civilisation, and which, extended to the national sphere, inevitably leads to imperialism, to the oppression and exploitation of other nations, of which Britain is the outstanding world example (" did not care about the interests

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of other countries "). And the crime of the Soviet Government is that it does not conform to this type, that it does care about the interests of other countries, that it thinks from a *world* point of view, that its citizens are ready to sacrifice themselves for other countries, that its statesmen are ready even in case of need to put the immediate interests of Russia second to world interests, knowing that the real interests of every part will best so be realised —this is the crime which bourgeois civilisation cannot forgive, and this is the first realisation in politics of that proletarian internationalism which is the basis of the future world civilisation. But all this is a closed book to the MacDonalds, Greys, and their like.

IN a recent publication of war propaganda against the Soviet Union, entitled *Soviet versus Civilisation*, the diplomatic writer " Augur " expresses very clearly the class character of the issue and the single character of the fight, as understood by the bourgeoisie. This book would have very little importance save as a sample of the more sensational war-propaganda literature for the attack on the Soviet Union were it not that its author, " Augur," is commonly supposed to stand very close to the Foreign Office and to express more or less its " unofficial " views. In that case the direct incitement to war which is the character of the book possesses more importance. It is prefaced by a quotation from Sir Eyre Crowe, a quotation from the famous minute of that old war-maker of the Foreign Office on July 31, 1914, when he was driving the confused and uncertain Grey to war : " The theory that England cannot engage in a big war means her abdication as an independent State." The implication of this quotation is clear. The principal interest of the book, however, lies in its unitary treatment of the war against the Soviet and China abroad and the war against the working class at home.

IN the first place the author declares frankly that the whole meaning of the Locarno Pact, European pacification, growth of the League of Nations, &c., is hostility to the Soviet Union as the decisive driving force behind the process. It is the " menace " of Bolshevism, he declares, which is " frightening Europe into unity." This testimony from an author who cannot at any rate

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be accused of being Communist is always valuable. He declares equally frankly that Great Britain is behind this hardening of the European front against the Soviet Union. "It is the rigidity of the present British Government which builds up the wall of a united Europe against them." This admission is also valuable, even though it adds nothing to our information (and indeed the publishers' promise on the cover of "historical facts unknown to the public until now" is scarcely substantiated save for some details of interest on the Genoa Conference). But the author proceeds to show that the war against the Soviet Union cannot be successfully conducted unless it is accompanied by a parallel war against the enemy at home—by which he makes clear that he means Communism and the Left Wing that goes with Communism.

"WE hope," he declares, with reference to the "Turn-the-Bolsheviks-out" campaign, "that the leaders of the 'turn-them-out' movement see the full bearing of their demand. If they have in view merely the expulsion of a few diplomatic second-raters and Tche-Ka-ridden commercial experts, they deal with the least important side of a problem which has become intricate." The real problem is "to rid the country of the Communist incubus." And the measures for this are no less clearly indicated. "If the British Communist Party is the tool of the Russian Communists" (this is simply the bourgeois way of saying, "If the British Communist Party is part of a genuine international organisation, instead of a police-licensed 'International' of the London and Amsterdam type") "it must be declared illegal. Other measures would not be effective." But how is this to be carried out? Here our Foreign Office expert reveals a really considerable piece of insight, based on the international police experience of the usefulness of Social Democracy. *Let the Labour Party, he says, be given the dirty job to do.* "We agree that it is more than difficult for a Conservative doctor to make the nation swallow this unusual pill, but there is the possibility of an exasperated Labour doctor forcing the pill down the throat of the patient." And he proceeds to quote from Snowden in his support.

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SO here the wheel comes full circle. The Labour Party leaders, who have given their support to the campaign against the Soviet Union on the grounds of " national interest," are required on the same grounds to carry out the same fight against the forces of working-class struggle, the Communists and their sympathisers, at home. The class character of the issue is revealed in its nakedness. And this is precisely what they have been doing. This is precisely the steady splitting and sapping of the Labour Party and the Trade Unions, the driving out and dismembering of the healthiest and strongest local labour parties in the industrial areas, the disfranchising of Trade Union members and elected representatives and of whole branches, which the MacDonald-Clynes-Thomas leadership is busily engaged in doing as the sole means of preserving their position, and beginning in this country the process which Social Democracy has carried out in Germany and France, to the disastrous weakening and disintegration of the movement. This is the first stage in the process of making Communism and all honest working-class struggle *illegal*, which the direct police machine is too clumsy to perform and can only serve finally to register, and which can only be effectively carried out through the representatives of Scotland Yard *within* the movement, the Thomases, Morrisons, Wakes, &c. The expulsion of the Rhondda Labour Parties, the disfranchisement of the branches and district council members of the National Union of General and Municipal Workers—these are the latest examples of a process which is the greatest present danger to the British working-class movement, greater than any Baldwin offensive against the Trade Unions, and which is the effective counterpart of the war preparations against the Soviet Union.

IT must be clear to every serious worker that the fight here raised is a single fight all the way from his own local labour party and Trade Union branch to the world issues of the Soviet Union and the Chinese workers ; that it is a single attack on the Soviet workers, on the Chinese workers, on the British Labour Movement, and on the Communists and Left Wing within the British Labour Movement. And it must also be clear

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that the heart of the fight, the centre of the attack from the point of view of the bourgeoisie, is international Communism. From this every worker worth his salt, whether connected with the Communists or not, whether politically agreeing with them or not, will recognise the absolute necessity of closing the ranks against the attack, and fighting hardest where the attack is thickest.

THIS applies with particular force to all those Left Wing elements who hesitate to unite their fight with that of the Communists, and endeavour to create a nebulous non-existent Left distinct from the Communists, failing to recognise that there can only be one fight, and that fight where the attack is. In particular these considerations may be recommended to such a body as the Independent Labour Party Conference, which meets this Easter ; which is seeking at present to attain a Left position by the false method of verbal programmes while avoiding the actual fight and daily issues, and while actually taking part in the process of disrupting the movement and expelling the Communists ; whose representatives are prepared to sign a united front with the Communists abroad for action to prevent the dispatch of troops to China, and refuse to form a united front with the same Communists on the same issue at home when it comes to practice : the seriousness of the situation should suggest to these representatives, or to the honest working-class delegates, that it is time to cease playing and begin work.

THE situation to-day demands absolute unity of the front, unity in action both at home and on the international field, unity against both the direct and the indirect capitalist attack. Shoulder to shoulder, British workers, Soviet workers, Chinese and Indian workers, the whole international movement, we shall drive back and break up the imperialist offensive, and learn in the unity of the fight to draw closer for the growing solidarity and common advance of the future. Let every force now pull its weight in the fight in the decisive issues that are coming.

R. P. D.

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TRADE UNIONS AND THE LAW

By W. H. HUTCHINSON

THE attack on the trade unions in the Press and by members of the Cabinet has now been going on for the last ten months, while two months ago the King's Speech, at the opening of Parliament, contained an announcement that the Government intended to introduce new legislation with regard to trade unions. No details of this legislation have yet been announced.

The attack purports to be a correction of the law rendered necessary by the General Strike. In point of fact, however, although this is put forward as the reason for introducing legislation, the content of the arguments is not in any way different from the arguments put up for years past. From 1906 right onward the capitalists have expressed their desire to curb the power of the unions. The whole atmosphere of the capitalist Press has been one of hostility to trade unions in so far as they engage in strikes or were by their contributions building the Labour Party.

Before the war, whatever the Liberal Government may have intended it could not very easily reverse the Acts of 1906 (the Trade Disputes Act) and 1913 (the Trade Union Act) which had been passed by itself. During the war period effective coalition of the trade unions with the Government for the purpose of winning the war secured them immunity from attacks which were directed against the unofficial movements that had sprung up on the Clyde and elsewhere. In any case the war legislation, Defence of the Realm Act, and the Munitions Acts, could be and were invoked to deal with those unofficial activities of trade unionists. After the war in the immediate two years succeeding the Armistice it was impossible to reverse the Trade Disputes Act, but it was possible to create by legislation an instrument that could be used against strikers or against the unions in case of need. This instrument was found in the Emergency Powers Act of 1920. Being a newer Act and having behind it the whole force of the Government, the Emergency Powers Act represented a very effective

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rival to the Trade Disputes Act. This, however, was as far as the capitalists dared to go, and it is arguable, if a more strenuous opposition had been put up to the Emergency Powers Act, whether it would have been passed, or at any rate whether it would have remained effective. Had the trade unionists put it as one of their immediate tasks the moment the Labour Government got into power that the Emergency Powers Act should have been repealed, it would have received the backing of the vast majority of the organised workers in this country.

However that may be, the attack on the trade unions was renewed year after year in Parliamentary Bills brought forward by private members, but obviously receiving the strongest sympathy from the Ministers of the Crown. The Cabinet were restrained by their fear of rousing a tremendous trade union opposition from giving those Bills Government backing. They remembered that it was the Taff Vale judgment and the agitation for the Trade Disputes Act which had largely created the Parliamentary Labour Party and defeated the Conservatives in 1906. And therefore it was on the last occasion when a private member's Bill was brought forward, in the spring of 1925, that the Prime Minister, knowing that at that point the capitalists dared not go forward with a frontal attack on the unions, made a virtue of necessity and paraded his prudence as a piece of magnanimity and kindliness. This was the occasion of his speech on "Peace in our time, O Lord." The fact was that their own apprehensions bound them over to keep the peace.

Now the significant fact is that the situation is scarcely changed from what it was two years ago. Again we have the tremendous propaganda of the Press and the politicians in favour of weakening the unions. The general line of attack is: –

(i) That the law in regard to the political levy is to be reversed ;
(ii) The law in regard to picketing to be made more stringent ;
(iii) The general strike to be made illegal ;
(iv) Unions to be made liable for the acts of their members ;
(v) Secret ballot is suggested ;
(vi) The separation of unions in Government services and vital industries from those in other industries has been mooted.

Yet though all these things are suggested, and while even more virulent propaganda is put forth portraying clearly the secret

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desires of the capitalists (witness the newspaper bills and headlines describing the beheading of the Shanghai trade unionists as "The way to deal with strikers"), the significant fact is that the Government for ten months has steadily delayed putting their vague, though insistent, threats into any precise shape. What is the meaning of this? Does it mean that some comprehensive combination law to suppress trade unions entirely is being prepared? Does it mean that the Government are steadily building up clauses of some Draconic measure? No. The position is plainly that the Government will only act if they think they can do so successfully. That is to say there is no Government attack if the trade unions are solid.

The rights that the trade unions have won have all been gained by their own strength in the teeth of the bitter opposition of the whole capitalist class, and they can only preserve them by the same means. Nothing the Government can do by way of Bills and Clauses can make one iota of difference to the real position if the movement is absolutely agreed to maintain its collective rights and organisation unbroken.

This is the crucial point. If it is understood and acted upon there is no fear whatever, no danger to anticipate.

But is it thoroughly understood? Is the Movement absolutely agreed to show an unbroken front? For here is the danger, not from without but from within.

Attempts have been made for some considerable time to get members of trade unions, who are associated with Conservative clubs up and down the country, to undertake propaganda with a view to forming new unions of what is termed a "non-political character"—actually of an openly pro-capitalist character. But the response has been so meagre that no one in any responsible position takes the matter seriously, and the loud trumpetings in *The Times* and other papers of the growth of non-political unions have found so little echo that they have been brought to a stop.

But there appears to be rather more in the other suggestion made in the newspaper articles, namely, that there should be "agreed" reforms of trade unionism. What does "agreed reform" mean? It means that one element in our movement should be divided from the other elements, lined up behind the

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Government against their fellow-trade unionists. This is the really serious position. This is an attack from within that would be a genuine danger. If from what I have already said it is clear that the Government dare not attack the trade union movement if it is united, then it follows equally clearly that the Government will concentrate all their endeavours on dividing the trade union movement. "Divide and Conquer" will be their policy. Conciliate one section and bring forward some specious programme that they can call "agreed reform."

Is there any indication that the Government will be successful in this sinister policy? Unfortunately there appears to be some acquiescence in the suggestion that Labour members of Parliament should consult with the representatives of the Government as to the line of policy to be adopted so as to lend colour to the idea that an agreement has been reached. This is the most fatal policy, and plays right into the hands of the Government if they can obtain—as has been stated—certain Labour members who favour reform. Then the Government will be placed in the position of really dividing our ranks, the line will be drawn between the Lefts and the Rights, a show of conciliation will be made, and the Labour Movement, both political and industrial, will be continuing to quarrel amongst itself to the detriment of the working population, as has been the case since the General Strike.

One has no desire to say anything that can be construed into separating the two wings of the workers' movement, but our politicians should remember that they are not sent to the House of Commons to agree to any modification of existing conditions that will place the industrial movement in any less strong position than they occupy at present. In referring to the two wings of the movement, political and industrial, I do not mean to suggest that there should be any difference or antagonism between the political and industrial aims of the movement. If such a difference arises then it is likely to be because some of the politicians are beginning to forsake the aims common to both the Trades Union Congress and the Labour Party.

Under no circumstances can the working class surrender the right to strike or agree to any limitation whatever of their freedom of action in strikes. Intimidation, victimisation, a million

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and a quarter unemployed: these things have weakened and are weakening the trade union movement without any question of legal fetters.

But it is suggested by some of the Haden Guest type that the unions should agree to surrender the general strike and nothing else. Let it be made perfectly clear. To give up the general strike is to give up the right to strike itself. No effective distinction can be drawn between the general strike and other strikes of large dimensions. What is to be the measure of the magnitude of a strike? The fact is that all big strikes at once involve the Government, bring the State into play on behalf of the employers and threaten vital supply of food, &c. It would soon be found that if a distinction were made in practice the distinction would be drawn by the Government so as to prevent strikes which had any chance of success and only to allow those in which the workers would be beaten. It would mean that the trade unions would have to be content with a partial weapon which allowed them only to fight in sections—and to be beaten in sections. The experience of the past six years should have convinced the workers that in that way lies defeat.

No weakness by division or splits can be afforded at the present crisis. The action of one important union and also the Labour Party in taking steps towards the exclusion of a section on the ground of particular views is dangerous at all times, but especially at the present time when it is playing straight into the hands of the Government. This is a question on which all trade unionists, whatever their views, must feel strongly. To meet the Government attack absolute unity is essential.

The trade unions were founded on the basis of the working-class industrial struggle and on that basis alone, and no question of minor divisions was allowed to come in. The backwardness of the trade union movement in other countries was partly due to their tendency to splitting. Unfortunately some people have become so obsessed by the idea of conciliating the middle-class vote that they are blind to the lessons that other countries show them, and are prepared to wreck the trade unions in order to gain some Party advantage. It may not be obvious now, but the collapse and ruin of trade unionism in other countries, the present

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perilous and unsatisfactory situation of the Amsterdam International Federation of Trade Unions should be a warning before it is too late.

In conclusion, the Government thinks the trade unions are played out, that the Movement is incapable of fighting further &c., and that they can do what they like. There could be no greater mistake. The voices of defeatism, of industrial peace here and there, are no evidence of the real state of the movement. On the contrary never was the spirit of the working-class consciousness or awakened militant unity stronger. If the Government think they can attack with impunity, they will learn their mistake at their own cost.

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MAX HOELZ

By ERNST TOLLER

" *The fundamental law of my volition and my actions has been that every man has a right to live, and the duty to help others. Throughout my life I have stressed most the value of fulfilling and realising the second half of this law : the duty of helping others. What once I did only instinctively, emotionally, for my neighbour, I do to-day with understanding and intelligence. It is a fine thing, Kant says somewhere, to do good to mankind from love and the impulse of sympathy, but the primary moral maxim to guide our conduct is solely duty. On that principle I act, therein lies my religion, my faith, which makes me inwardly strong and happy and self-confident. That is enough for me, all the rest is merely formal. You may reply that my theory is sharply opposed to my actual deeds . . . I am never satisfied with merely understanding what is essential, but once I have understood, I try with all my might to translate it into fact. It is not for the sake of fighting that I am taking part in the revolutionary struggle. Once I had been driven to the realisation that the aim of human liberation could not be reached by the road along which the great Nazarene pointed, I drew the necessary conclusions and act in accordance with them, even if such action is contrary to my feelings, my emotions. I count myself among those who would be unspeakably happy if every struggle of man against man should cease. Whether that will ever be possible, I dare not determine. But I hold it my duty to exert all my strength in order that the crudest and most obvious causes of the struggle of man against man may be removed. I regard the existence of private property in land and the means of production as such. . . . Of what use to mankind are the glorious intellectual creations and ideals of a Socrates, a Rousseau, a Kant, Fichte, Marx, if they remain mere words, mere dead letters ? If they are not realised as life-giving, liberating actualities.*"

SO wrote Max Hoelz to his defending counsel from the prison in Münster on July 24, 1922. No one can ignore the force and purity of his words, not even the citizen whose press portrayed Hoelz as a blood-thirsty robber captain, who was not satisfied if he had not burnt three mansions every day before

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breakfast and had three men shot at supper time. This confession of faith shows us a man who takes his own actions seriously, who follows his chosen path from a deep conviction of duty, knowing the tragic element in every revolution and yet possessed by a burning faith in revolution. Some have called Max Hoelz the heir of Thomas Münzer, and rightly, for only in the German Peasant Rising have the people brought forth such men.

The son of a small peasant and agricultural labourer, he himself began life as a farm labourer. The bright boy attracted the notice of an engineer, who took him under his care and sent him to England. There Hoelz found unpaid work in an engineering office. He returned to Germany and, as he could not find employment as a mechanic, he worked as a house-porter and labourer. Later, in Dresden, he attended a private school, meaning to study and prepare for a university engineering course. He earned the money for his school fees by serving in skittle alleys at public-houses, and later as a cinematograph operator.

The war broke out, and Max Hoelz volunteered with a Saxon regiment of hussars. At the front he was one of the bravest despatch riders. Hitherto he had been of the petty bourgeoisie, his ideal to get on, to do well, to push his way out of the ranks, to work his way up. His experience of the " great time " opened his eyes. Where he had thought to find freedom, he saw oppression and complicity in the criminal schemes of the mighty. He joined the ranks of his struggling worker comrades, and after the war we find him in Saxony selling Socialist papers and speaking at meetings. As formerly he had spent his nights reading books on engineering, so now he studied in order to understand Socialist doctrine. His name first appeared in the papers on the occasion of an unemployed demonstration in Falkenstein. As a member of the Unemployed Committee he compelled the town authorities to provide food for the hungry, and wood and coal for the shivering people. The mayor called in the military, the Unemployed Committee was arrested, but Max Hoelz escaped. He worked and agitated under another name in the Launa works and other places.

At the time of the Kapp coup Hoelz hastened to Falkenstein and led an armed troop of workers against the Kappist insurgents. The workers gained the upper hand in Vogtland, and it was not

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until they were surrounded by fifty-thousand soldiers of the regular army that Hoelz disbanded his troop and crossed the Czech frontier. The Czech courts refused his extradition. He was not a common criminal ; political motives had determined his actions. When he received news of the March rising in Middle Germany, Hoelz left his safe place of exile and, though a price was on his head, he fought in the foremost ranks, in the most responsible position. The rising was crushed, and the minutes of a Commission of Inquiry set up by the Prussian Diet give a terrible picture of the conduct of the military.

Again Hoelz escaped, in spite of fierce pursuit. The comfortable classes regarded him as their most dangerous adversary.

At last he was arrested ; a spy betrayed him to the Berlin police. After his arrest the Berlin police authorities offered, on April 16, a reward of 50,000 marks for evidence that would lead to his conviction. Just think of it ! A public authority deliberately seeks evidence that shall lead to the conviction of an accused person !

Erich Mühsam, in his courageous pamphlet, *Justice for Max Hoelz*, which the *Rote Hilfe* published in Berlin, writes :—

> . . . Either the Public Prosecutor, seeking independent witnesses, as is his duty, really cannot produce a single one to confirm his suspicions that Max Hoelz has committed a certain crime for which he has been arrested—then, since his suspicions are proved mistaken, or since there is lack of evidence, he must drop the case and set the accused at liberty—or his inquiries produce the necessary evidence and he must hand the prisoner over to the competent court and ask for a date to be fixed for the trial, and must leave it to the court to determine whether, and how severely, the prisoner should be punished. . . . We need hardly discuss the value of witnesses who hurried to offer their evidence regarding the "criminal" Hoelz after this proclamation.

The trial was not held in Thuringia. Hoelz was brought alone before a Berlin court. He accepted responsibility for all his revolutionary acts. Only one he repudiated—the shooting of a landowner named Hess. But it was just that of which he was accused. The wife of the murdered man, who had not recognised Hoelz during the preliminary inquiry, thought during the course of the trial that she recognised the perpetrator in him, and another witness for the prosecution named Uebe, whose trustworthiness

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was even then open to serious doubt, clinched the matter. Hoelz defended his case in an admirable speech, which rose to a tremendous arraignment of capitalist society. It was of no use, the court held the case against him to be proved, and he was condemned to penal servitude for life.

There followed bitter years of penal servitude ; he made unceasing efforts to get his case re-opened. He felt himself to be unjustly sentenced, unjustly treated. The stronger a man's character, the more hardly he suffers under imprisonment. European prisons make it their task to break the prisoner's will. Woe to the man who shows strength of character. And Hoelz did show strength of character. It is strange ; in bourgeois history books those men are crowned with praise who refused to bow, in spite of their opponents' superior power. But if a worker adopts such an attitude, no one understands him.

At last, after five years, the investigations of Hoelz' friends have brought about a decisive change in the situation.

In the Imperial Amnesty Committee, Felix Halle made the following statement on behalf of the Communist Parliamentary Party :—

> A man called Friehe has come to Dr. Apfel, Hoelz' defending counsel, in order to unburden his conscience, and has made the following declaration :—
>
> He took part in the Hoelz rising of 1921 and in that capacity was at Roitzschgen, and fired the shots at the landowner Hess, for which Hoelz had been accused of manslaughter ; further, he had shot at Hess with his rifle, in order to put him out of action, and moreover, he had called upon his comrades to shoot at Hess, feeling menaced by him. Because of this feeling that he was menaced, and being beside himself with fear and rage, he finally killed Hess, who had been shot at by the others as well.

Halle, moreover, moved the following resolution :—

> That the Amnesty Committee resolves to examine the locksmith, Uebe, on the subject of his conviction that in his statements before a Special Court in 1921 in the criminal case against Hoelz his evidence was in fact incorrect, in so far as he was no longer able to uphold his declaration that Max Hoelz fired several shots at the landowner Hess. After the statements made to him by the actual perpetrator, Uebe is convinced that the evidence then given by him was based upon a confusion of persons.

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As early as October, 1924, Mrs. Hess had declared that fresh doubts had arisen in her mind whether Hoelz was the real perpetrator.

Uebe's recantation and Friehe's confession made the deepest impression upon the Committee and upon German public opinion. The Amnesty Committee delegated its chairman, Dr. Moses, to visit the prison at Gross Strehlitz.

Meantime weeks passed. Those who had hoped that Hoelz would be set at liberty, at least provisionally, were disappointed. Hoelz had been excluded from the amnesty of 1921 solely because he was then accounted a murderer. As far as high treason alone was concerned, he must, in accordance with the intention of the law, have been included in the amnesty.

And now, what is to be done? Who can tolerate—wherever he may stand—that a man should remain one day longer in gaol for a crime that he has never committed? Should not public opinion raise a passionate demand for justice? Silence on all sides, but Hoelz need not fear that he will be forgotten. It is not the worst citizens of Germany who realise that this is no personal question, that it is an imperative moral duty to free this man of his heavy burden. And Germans, without distinction of party, have made the demand for Hoelz' liberation a political demand. That is as it should be, for such a trial as this is never a purely judicial affair. Trial and sentence confirm the outcome of the political struggle for power.

Ehrhardt, Hitler, and all those who were sentenced for high treason on the side of the reaction in Germany enjoy their freedom; and Hoelz and the 1,300 to 1,500 others still immured in German prisons are to remain entombed, broken? No, freedom for Max Hoelz, freedom for all political prisoners!

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IMPERIALIST OPPRESSION IN LATIN AMERICA

By CODOVILLA

The Methods of Imperialist Penetration

THE struggle which is now developing among the imperialist countries for the conquest of raw material with the object of submitting world economic forces to their domination is particularly intense in the countries of Latin America. This struggle is, above all, developing between British imperialism and American imperialism.

The object of these two imperialist States is the economic and political subjection of the Latin American countries. This is particularly true of the United States. However, these powers sometimes play an objectively progressive rôle, when in order to carry out their penetration they have to get the support of the petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie.

This has happened in many countries of Latin America. Before the war, all these countries with few exceptions were under the direct influence of Great Britain. The characteristic of the latter country is that it is a country of finance capital, which above all imports raw materials to transform them into manufactured products in the metropolis and then sells them again in the markets from which the raw material came. The policy of Great Britain in these countries has played a reactionary rôle. This rôle was supported by the big landed proprietors who have been absolute masters there. In taking raw materials, Britain prevents all economic development, and therefore all development of the petty bourgeoisie and of the national industrial bourgeoisie.

During the war Great Britain more or less had to abandon these markets, being absorbed above all in war production. Thereupon a national industry rose up in the Latin American countries, transforming a large part of the raw material which was no longer bought by Great Britain from the national industries. National

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industries have been started, particularly in countries such as Argentine, Brazil, Chile and Uruguay.

After the war Great Britain endeavoured to regain her influence in the South American market, but she had to reckon with numerous competitors, notably North American imperialism, young national industry and the protection laws established by the young countries to defend themselves against foreign competition.

On the other hand, American imperialism was compelled to combat British influence in these countries by a more flexible and appropriate policy, while aiming at the same object. British imperialism had already invested capital in railways, means of transportation, and had already made loans to Governments and held them under her influence. Where these Governments were based on the big landed proprietors, American imperialism had to get the support of the petty bourgeoisie and of the liberal bourgeoisie in order to penetrate into these countries.

Another factor which favours the United States is a historic factor. In many of these countries, with the exception of the Argentine where there is already a national industrial bourgeoisie which participates in power,we have still a situation which existed in France before the bourgeois revolution. It should not be forgotten that in Brazil it is only fifty years since slavery was abolished, while feudalism still exists and predominates in nearly all districts of the country.

As already pointed out, the characteristic of British imperialist policy of penetration is the prevention of industrial development of these countries. It is evident that all the liberal petty bourgeoisie, which would like to develop national industry and become the ruling class, is against the big landed proprietors, and for this reason against British imperialism. America has profited from this situation; in allying herself with this new social stratum, in increasing her interests in the national industry by investing capital and placing machinery, she aids the development of the industries that have sprung up during the war.

American imperialism employs two forms of penetration: with its industrial capital which it invests in new industries, and with its finance capital which penetrates little by little and gains

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ground in Latin America. For example, in the Argentine before the war there was not a single American bank or a single direct railway line with North America. Now there are several banks, and already a regular railway service several times a week (passengers and goods) between the United States and the Argentine. But what facilitates still more the development of North American imperialism at the expense of British imperialism is that the former invests its capital in industrial enterprises which are continually developing, whereas Great Britain has invested practically everything in transport and Government loans. In 1925 the foreign capital invested in the Argentine amounted in round figures to £527,000,000, of which £397,000,000 belonged to Great Britain. Of the 397 millions invested by Britain, 233 millions were invested in railways, 80 in Government loans, and 84 in banks, agricultural enterprises, tramways and other industrial enterprises. The United States, which has lent approximately £80 millions, has nearly everything invested in industrial enterprises, banks and Government loans.

The United States dominates in the industrial branches in whose development she has assisted. For example, the United States owns heavy investments in the meat trade, where about 350,000 workers are employed. There are American investments in the big refrigerator plants, and also in the boot and shoe, cotton and wool industries. Formerly all cloth was imported from England, now it is made in the Argentine itself. Thus the U.S.A. is especially engaged in developing the national industry and gaining control over it.

This process of industrial development is a process of concentration; one section of the petty bourgeoisie and of the industrial bourgeoisie is associated with American imperialism, while another section is becoming proletarianised. This is the result of the penetration of American imperialism into the Argentine.

Another example is that of Brazil, where the situation differs somewhat from that in the Argentine. Industrial development in Brazil is taking place unevenly, and only in certain branches of industry. An enormous quantity of the raw material is in the hands of Great Britain, which, in her policy of penetration, has

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been for more than a century supported by the Governments of the big landed proprietors.

In 1925, the total amount of capital exported by Great Britain into Brazil reached £310 millions, nearly 50 per cent. of which was Government loans, and the remainder was invested in agricultural enterprises, railways, banks and industries. Because of this, Britain has endeavoured to obtain a certain political control over the country by supporting the reactionary policy of the Government of the big landed proprietors.

The landowners have hindered, by legal means, the industrial bourgeoisie from getting into power, not only in the economic field but also in politics. This led to the armed revolt of 1922, where the oppressed strata attempted to overthrow the power of the big landed proprietors. The revolt was suppressed at the outset. The second revolt in 1924, when the U.S.A. helped the revolutionaries by all measures and gave them money, at first succeeded. The working-class region of San Paolo and a whole section of the more industrial regions were finally occupied because of the aid of Great Britain, which on its part sent money to the Government and promised it military support if necessary. The revolt was crushed. But the spirit of revolt is still latent. The revolutionaries are not yet disarmed. They are concentrated in the interior of the country in the district of Mattogrosso, and they still keep the Government in check. The petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie will finally triumph; firstly, because they have the support of the United States imperialism; and, secondly, for historic reasons. In the district of San Paolo, American imperialism has obtained the absolute monopoly of the production of coffee and certain concessions in the productive districts of cotton and rubber, which until last year were reserved for Great Britain.

On the other hand, with the federal state system the industrial bourgeoisie dominates and it has facilitated the penetration of American capital. This further increases the economic and political antagonisms of this country, where two tendencies come into collision, that is to say, one nation against another nation: the industrial nation against the big landed proprietors who are still in power, but who will undoubtedly soon be ousted.

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These two examples of the two most important countries of South America show the characteristic form of American imperialist penetration.

Different Degrees of Imperialist Oppression

Although exercised in general over all countries of Latin America, the degree of imperialist oppression varies according to the different economic and political forms of the various countries.

Wherever the big landed proprietors are in power, and maintain this with the support of British imperialism, the petty bourgeoisie struggles to develop itself and to become the ruling class. North American imperialism, in supporting the petty bourgeoisie, plays an objectively progressive rôle. But wherever the penetration of British imperialism is too weak, where American imperialism is supported by the same social strata as the British, it plays the same reactionary rôle as the latter.

In order to facilitate this analysis the countries of Latin America may be divided into four categories:—

(a) Colonial countries, depending directly, economically, and politically, on American imperialism.

(b) Semi-colonial countries, which, by their dependence on foreign finance capital, despite their political independence, are economically subjected to American imperialism. In these countries, the Governments are in the hands of the big landed proprietors.

(c) Politically and economically independent countries, which in the most important economic fields are already penetrated by imperialism, and are more and more subjected to its domination.

(d) Countries where there are already democratic revolutionary Governments which are endeavouring to build up a national economy.

In the first category are the countries of Central America controlled by United States imperialism not only financially, but also politically and militarily. The so-called independent republics of the Caribbean region (Cuba, Haiti, Santo Domingo, Nicaragua, Guatimala, Honduras, San Salvador, Costa Rica, &c.)

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are in reality colonies of American imperialism. The only stable Governments in these countries are those which are supported by the U.S.A. and serve its interests. The insurrections which frequently take place are instigated by American imperialism in order to extend its domination.

On the other hand, America has imposed "financial control-commissions" in these countries which control their own economic activity and even the orientation of their policy. The assessment of taxes, foreign trade, have to be approved by the commission.

It stands to reason that the local Government has no control in the American enterprises existing in the country, and that the imperialists are the absolute masters. That is why these countries can be considered as absolute colonies.

The countries of the second category, such as Venezuela, Columbia, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, &c., are politically independent but are subjected to American imperialism by means of concessions and loans. America has obtained a number of concessions in the districts richest in raw materials, where she has entrenched herself as in a conquered country. She has established her own control and her own conditions of labour. In the countries where working-class legislation exists, America has never applied this legislation in her concessions. Native workers are exploited like colonials; they work from ten to twelve hours per day; meetings and strikes are forbidden. The workers live in houses belonging to the employers, and have to buy their goods in the employers' shops. They are absolutely bound to the enterprise; working-class revolts are ruthlessly suppressed. The Government has no effective power over the districts given in concession to American imperialism. On the other hand, the majority of the bourgeois politicians are bound to the imperialist forces either as shareholders or else as employees of the enterprises.

In short, the vital forces of national economy are monopolised by North American imperialism (British imperialism intervenes here to a negligible extent), which can export oil, brass, copper, rubber, cotton, wool, coffee, tobacco, &c., at its ease.

In the third category we find the more important countries, the Argentine, Brazil, and Chile. The struggle between American and British imperialism is more acute here than elsewhere. This

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is precisely because there is a certain amount of industrial development, and the two imperialisms influence different economic tendencies, so that the definite domination of one of the two is very difficult. Thus, imperialist penetration is effected with a certain flexibility and only makes itself felt in the economic field, avoiding all political collision which could make the Government think that the political independence of the country is placed in danger by imperialist interests.

On the other hand, the national bourgeoisie already feels strong, and if it accepts collaboration of foreign capital in order to develop economically, it always thinks of realising its independence and of building up the economy of the country with its own resources.

Despite such illusions of the petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie, imperialist penetration continues in all branches of economic activity, and subjects them more and more to its control every day. The concentration and modernisation of the industrial enterprises is being carried out, entailing the pauperisation of a section of the petty bourgeoisie, reductions of salaries, &c., while concentration of landed property causes proletarianisation of the peasants.

In the fourth category is Mexico. Foreign imperialism has penetrated various branches of national economy, but despite the internal and external contradictions, the petty bourgeois Government aims at the economic and political independence of the country on the basis, or with several elements, of Socialist construction. We can to a certain extent compare the present situation of Mexico with that of Russia after the Kerensky revolution. A Social-Democratic Government, afraid of being overtaken by the proletarian revolution, is still supported by capitalist elements, which, beaten by the revolutionaries on the field of armed struggle, endeavour to re-establish their economic situation by coming to an agreement with the Government.

Without a firm economic basis, and politically dislocated by sectionalism, the petty bourgeoisie has to make concessions first to the bourgeoisie then to the workers and peasants, who represent the only basis upon which the petty bourgeois Government can rely to repulse the internal and external reactionary attacks.

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The Importance of Latin America as a Market for Industrial Capital and as a Reserve of Raw Material

Latin America is of very great importance for the policy of expansion of the imperialist countries, and in particular for the United States. This is clearly seen if we analyse the figures for the industrial and financial capital invested in Latin America, *viz.*, 4,245 million dollars, of which 3,230 are industrial capital and 1,015 finance capital, *i.e.*, 40 per cent. of the total capital exported by the United States. As far as trade is concerned, United States trade with South America reached 2,095 million dollars, *i.e.*, one-quarter of the total American trade.

Everyone knows the heated struggle which is taking place among the imperialist powers for the conquest of the sources of essential raw material such as oil, rubber, coal, cotton, copper, brass, and nitrates. Latin America possesses all these raw materials in great quantities, and with the exception of Mexico one can say almost in an unexploited condition. British and American imperialism covet the greatest possible number of concessions, and in this struggle the U.S.A., by the flexibility of her policy of penetration, has more chances than Great Britain.

At the present time America is endeavouring to seize oil sources. It is a fundamental problem for America to prevent Great Britain getting hold of them. At times she does not exploit these oil regions immediately, since the necessary work and means of transportation require large investments of capital; she waits in order to do it at a moment more advantageous to her interests. Thus immense oil regions conceded to Standard Oil in Argentine, Bolivia, Peru, Columbia, and Venezuela are still unexploited. This has created scandals in certain countries where the industrial bourgeoisie has denounced this policy of sabotage of the national economic interests.

The utility of an oil reserve has been made still more clear by the declarations of the scientific commission appointed by the oil department of the U.S.A., stating that if the exploitation of oil sources continued as hitherto, they would be exhausted in a short time. This commission had already made similar forecasts which were immediately denied. But in its last report in July of 1926, after having studied the problem carefully, the com-

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mission declared than in six or seven years there would be no more oil in North America.

It is well known that Mexico is the second oil-producing country in the world, but what is probably less known is that other countries of South America possess still more oil than Mexico. This is the case with Venezuela. In this country, the struggle for oil districts between Standard Oil and Royal Dutch is extremely acute. The former wants to conserve its concessions at all costs, while the latter wants to repurchase them in order to win the whole zone under its influence. The oil region of Maracaibo is larger than Belgium and is 140 miles nearer to New York than the oil districts of Mexico. On the other hand, thanks to river transport to the sea, the oil can be sold in the ports cheaper than that of Mexico and California. What is the increase of oil production in this country? Attempts at exploitation were made as early as 1907, but effective exploitation only commenced in 1921 with a production of 446,000 barrels; in 1923 the production was already 4,000,000 barrels, in 1925 it was 20,000,000 barrels, and this year will be 35,000,000 barrels. This means that in five years production has increased from half a million to thirty-five million barrels. We are assured that in 1930 this country may be one of the first oil-producing countries in the world.

The exploitation of oil is beginning to be intensified in the other South American countries: Peru, with 1 million tons; Argentine, with 0·7 millions; and the remainder of the countries with 1·4 millions.

Another important mineral exploitation which is developing enormously is that of copper, which belongs for the most part to the U.S.A. In Chile, in Bolivia and in Peru 90 per cent. of the copper production is in the hands of American enterprises. In Chile, in particular, America has installed modern factories, where already about 30,000 workers are employed. Production has increased from 45,000 tons in 1916 to 207,000 tons in 1925, with a tendency to increase. After Chile come Mexico, Peru, Bolivia and Cuba in order of production.

The exploitation of nitrates in Chile is also of world importance. Owing to this exploitation, Great Britain had the monopoly of

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nitrates before the war. The U.S.A. obtained a number of concessions in the copper regions, &c., but Great Britain had the saltpetre and the coal. As saltpetre is an essential production for America, both for war and peace industry, she is endeavouring to conquer this region by all possible means. In order to smash the British monopoly she has tried various ways, such as the production of synthetic saltpetre and the loan of capital to the German nitrate industry for its development. In this way she has caused several crises by withdrawing from the market as a buyer. Later on she strengthened her position. By means of loans to the Government of Chile she obtained a number of concessions in the saltpetre region. She established modern production there in order to produce better than Great Britain. She compelled the latter first to compromise and later, in the middle of 1926, to sell the factories. To-day, American enterprises dominate the production of nitrate throughout the whole country. The increase of this production has followed the same route as that of copper. It increased from 498,000 tons in 1914 to 909,000 tons in 1925-26. There are at present about 100 factories with more than 40,000 workers employed. As a result of this penetration, American exports of capital to Chile increased from 25,000,000 dollars in 1913 to 350,000,000 dollars in 1925.

The production of cotton has also increased in these countries. In Brazil it increased from 907,000 quintals in 1913 to 1,312,000 in 1920. In Peru the increase was from 159,000 to 452,000 quintals; in Argentine from 6,000 to 146,000 quintals, while the production in Paraguay last year was 90,000,000 quintals. The production continues to increase in all these countries.

There is also a strong industrial development in the districts of San Paolo and of Rio de Janeiro. In 1920 there were 104,000 textile workers, while now there are already about 180,000.

Another important raw material in South America is rubber. It constitutes a quarter of the imports to the United States. The latter wants to escape the British monopoly which costs it a great deal. Although South America is very adaptable to this production, only Brazil can produce large quantities. At the present time, out of £35,000,000 total production £29,000,000 are sold to the U.S.A. British and United States imperialism are

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feverishly contesting the regions suited for the production of rubber.

With regard to the production of coffee, cocoa, and other agricultural products, and cattle rearing, the importance of the South American countries is already known. It is well known that the Argentine occupies the second place in the export of cereals and that the meat trade is widely developed.

Such is the general picture of the riches of Latin America, which add fuel to the flames of the rivalry among the imperialist countries, and it shows the importance of these countries in the total world economy.

Colonial Methods of Imperialist Penetration

The characteristic feature of imperialist penetration is the economic and political oppression of the South American countries and their real colonial exploitation.

The two provinces, Tacna and Arica, in the north of Chile are the object of desire both of Chile and Peru. From the international point of view in general, it is not understood why America has prevented the solution of this question.

These two provinces belonged to Chile after the war with Bolivia. The war was won by Chile. But under the terms of the treaty, these two provinces should have decided by plebiscite to which country they wanted to be attached. Chile and Peru never came to agreement on this plebiscite, and the arbitration of America was solicited. But instead of favouring the plebiscite, America endeavoured to prevent it by all possible means. She wanted to neutralise these districts in order to subject them to her influence. Firstly, she wanted to create there oil depôts for exportation to Europe and other countries of South America from her Bolivian oilfields. Secondly, to have a military base in case of necessity against the revolutionary movements of South America, and above all Chile. Thirdly, to have a base in the event of war with Japan or conflicts in the Pacific. Oil, copper and tin are all that is necessary to establish influence on the Continent and acquire a military base.

Here we see imperialism directly and resolutely guiding the general policy of these countries. In other cases imperialist

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pressure is also exercised on the interests of the bourgeois strata of one country.

Let us take for example one of the most important countries, the Argentine which is the second wheat exporting country in the world. The wheat production of this country is appropriated by the big British and American trusts which have undisputed domination of the market to the detriment of the middle farmers and small peasants. It is they who establish the prices of wheat. If the small peasants do not accept these prices they are sure of not being able to sell their harvests. For example, production may be concentrated in the co-operatives, but afterwards it must be sold; and as the co-operatives have no possibility of advancing credits, the farmers, in order to obtain these credits, are obliged to fall into the clutches of the wheat purchasing trusts. In the case of a farmer being able to sell his harvest directly, he has no means of transportation (the railways, maritime, transport, &c., being the property of American-British companies), and if he does not accept the conditions of the trusts he can concentrate as much corn as he likes but he will not be able to transport it to the markets. Recently a congress of small and big farmers protested against the economic oppression of the big trusts, demanding that the Government should dissolve and also nationalise the refrigerative enterprises and the railways. But despite this protest the big trusts not only are not dissolved, but foreign capital is penetrating more and more into the economic life of the country every day, concentrating production and eliminating the small producers. The big foreign enterprises are buying up increasingly large areas of land for cattle rearing and agricultural produce. By this it will be very easy for them to create artificial crises on the market and to cause drops in prices.

Chile is another example of the system of colonial exploitation. The saltpetre mines, copper, and coal are exploited there in quite a primitive manner. In order to extract the saltpetre, mines are dug and charged with tons of dynamite connected to an electric station and then blown up by a charge of electric current. It once happened that an electrician pulled the wrong switch and sent the current to the mine thinking it was an electric light.

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The mine blew up while 300 people were working there; there were 100 victims, including children. The laws of Chile forbid the employment of children under fourteen years, but in this mine children of ten and twelve years of age were working. In order not to be caught red-handed infringing the law, the mine-owners killed off the wounded children. In reply to the indignant protests which arose throughout the whole country they said: "We killed them out of humanitarian feelings, in order to minimise their sufferings."

It should be added that the small native peasants expelled from their land every day are obliged to work as labourers under miserable conditions. They have to work eight or ten hours per day for starvation wages and are more and more exploited by the modern technique.

These three examples of the most important countries illustrate imperialist penetration in Latin America in the economic and politicial fields.

(*To be concluded*)

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NEW ZEALAND AND THE EMPIRE

By R. P. ANSCHUTZ

AN amusing and instructive sidelight on the recent Empire Conference is provided in *The Times* Special New Zealand Number. The motive prompting its issue is plainly expressed in the editorial: "At the recent Imperial Conference, the New Zealand view of the Empire, though vigorously asserted, did not fill the forefront of the picture. The emphasis at that time was in another direction, and the achievement of the Conference lay in removing misunderstandings and assuaging feelings that New Zealand, blessed with a happier history, has never had cause to know. So it happened that the representatives of a people undivided in origin, with no unhappy past or differences of race (*sic !*) to handicap modern statesmanship, found themselves acquiescing in a somewhat less wholehearted view of the meaning of Imperial co-operation than they themselves were anxious to express."

That is to say, New Zealand is to be rewarded for her "patriotism" by "the finest and most valuable advertisement that the Dominion has ever received in printed form in the Motherland" (*New Zealand Herald*) in the hope that the other Dominions may mend their ways.

The Times Special Number is replete with the dense Jingoistic stupidity that constitutes the outlook of the average New Zealander. The Prime Minister's contribution is typical. It opens with the proposition that "New Zealand is British to the core," it finishes with a quotation from the Prince of Wales, and in between it talks of England, the "Homeland," Great Britain, the "Motherland," the United Kingdom and the "Old Land." Everything, according to Mr. Coates, is fine in the best of all possible Empires as long as we remain true to our British breeding. And the proof of this is the prosperity of the New Zealand people —"99 per cent. of it British!" Mr. Coates seriously draws the conclusion that wherever this British stock is present prosperity will result. In the face of this it is, perhaps, worth while to examine

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briefly the forces operating in New Zealand, the resulting conditions, and the course of development.

The fundamental fact about New Zealand, so far, is its isolation and its consequent primitive organisation. New Zealand is out of the way, and so has not been exposed to the factors which in most other parts of the world have made for the tightening and speeding up of capitalist economy. In so far as life is easy there it is easy because it is at a low state of development, and it is at a low state of development because it is isolated and therefore immune from the more exacting demands of capital.

But it is obvious that a prosperity which is founded on isolation is a wholly artificial prosperity, which will inevitably fail as the competition between capital for areas of exploitation grows more stringent. The prosperity of New Zealand is the prosperity of its small farmers, and these small farmers are doomed. Sooner or later they must become either large farmers or farm labourers. There are no other alternatives, and no legislation or State control can provide a remedy. This process is now well under way in New Zealand, as is even shown in *The Times* Special Number in the article on "Finance" by Sir George Elliot, chairman of the Bank of New Zealand. He says:—

> Since the slump on farm lands in 1921, and the heavy losses made by mortgagees, there has been a disposition on the part of leading institutions and investors generally to look with disfavour on such securities, and to turn their attention to loans for the development of hydro-electric, road, harbour, and other improvement schemes, of which there have been numerous flotations by municipal and other public authorities during the last few years. On such investments from 5½ to 6 per cent. is being obtained for periods of from 20 to 36½ years, against from 6 to 6½ per cent. on mortgages.

There follow details about State advances, and the article continues:—

> It is becoming increasingly evident that if primary production, on which the country absolutely depends, is to be maintained and developed loans for long periods are essential. In view of this, an interesting experiment is about to be made by the Bank of New Zealand, in which institution the Government owns one-third of the capital. An Act of Parliament has been passed authorising the bank to set up a special department, to be known as the "Long-Term Mortgage Department," for the purpose of making loans on an amortisation basis, bearing interest at the rate of 6 per cent. plus an

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adequate sinking fund. By this Act the bank is empowered to issue special capital as well as debentures secured against the long-dated loans to an amount thrice that of the special share capital.

From this it may be seen how far in the clouds is "the New Zealand ideal" of "a little farm well tilled." The small farmer cannot carry on without mortgages, and even with mortgages his chances of success are estimated to be so poor that he cannot raise money in the open market. Even if he does he becomes simply a labourer for finance capital, liable to eviction without a penny for years of work should a fall in prices occur. From figures given by the *New Zealand Year Book* for 1926 it may be calculated that between 1919 and 1925 (inclusive) mortgages were raised on thirty-seven million acres, that is, 84.4 per cent. of the total occupied area. At this rate the whole of the occupied rural land in New Zealand is mortgaged every 8.3 years.

The consequence of this failure of the small farmer may be seen very plainly in the drift of population from the country to the town:—

Census	Rural population per cent.	Urban population per cent.
1906	57.96	44.04
1911	57.07	42.93
1916	54.18	45.82
1921	51.23	48.77

And the further consequences in the increase in factory production:—

Date	No. of productive employees in thousands	Value of land, buildings, machinery (£ millions)	Value added by manufacture (£ millions)	Average h.p. per employee
1916 ..	51	21	13	2.5
1921 ..	64	38	26	3.1
1925 ..	72	50	32	4.0

From all this it is plainly evident that the isolation which has enabled New Zealand to become a home of prosperous small farmers is breaking down. Finance capital is taking charge and is ushering in industrial capitalism. The expropriated small farmer is providing an increasingly large supply of factory labour. The unexpropriated small farmer is sinking to the position of a farm labourer working for the banks. In twenty years' time it is obvious there will be no longer unanimity in "patriotism." New Zealand will have something else to think about.

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BERTRAND RUSSELL AND MODERN PHYSICS[1]

By MAX LEVIEN

Since the revolution which overturned theoretical science the necessity of arranging the accumulation of purely empirical discoveries has caused the opposing empiricists to pay more and more attention to the dialectical character of the operations of nature. The old rigid antagonisms, the sharp impassable frontier lines, are more and more becoming abolished.

(Engels : " Anti-Duhring," Second preface, 1885.)

When I had grown used to Hegel's language and mastered his method, I began to perceive that Hegel was much nearer to our standpoint than to the standpoint of his followers ; he was so in his early works, he was so everywhere where his genius had got out of hand, and had dashed forward forgetting the gates of Brandenburg. The philosophy of Hegel is the algebra of revolution, it emancipates a man in an extraordinary way and leaves not a stone standing of the Christian world, of the world of out lived tradition.

(Alexander Herzen : " Thoughts and Memories.")

Human knowledge does not pursue a straight course, but a course which approximates to a spiral.

(Lenin : " On the Question of Dialectics.")

MR. BERTRAND RUSSELL is a very famous man, a Fellow of the Royal Society, the heir presumptive to an ancient Earldom, and sometime Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge. His followers of the I.L.P. call him " the greatest living philosopher." At any rate we came across this *epitheton ornans* in an I.L.P. review of his pamphlet, *Democracy and Direct Action* of 1919. Russell is still alive, so far as we know, and may still pass as the greatest philosopher, but since there is nothing more tedious than to argue with a Fabian about philosophy, we will leave Mr. MacDonald and his fellows with their idea of the " greatest living philosopher."

Nevertheless, Mr. Bertrand Russell is undoubtedly a very interesting man, and that primarily because he shows with great clearness the helplessness of the modern " progressive " intellectuals of Great Britain. His writings show with incomparable force the barrenness of the subjectivist outlook. He has also distinguished himself by an extraordinary literary fecundity and an equal

[1] A Review of Bertrand Russell: *The A B C of Atoms.* Translated from the German edition of the Russian periodical *Under the Banner of Marxism.*

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catholicity of interest. He is one of the leading English mathematicians, and has written a series of fundamental theoretical works on the principles and, in particular, on the philosophy of mathematics. He is responsible also for several purely philosophical works, and a number of social-political writings, of a pacifist-reformist tendency, advocating a "constructive" socialism of the Guild-socialist type. Further, there appeared some time ago, a little book by Russell called *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism*, and more recently a book on China. He is thus, in truth, a "modern" man, thoroughly expressing the spirit of the age.

The basis of Russell's whole outlook is scepticism. As regards his theory of knowledge he is subjectivist, in mathematics he clings to logistic,[2] in social theory he is idealist, and finally in politics petit-bourgeois utopian, which tendencies, be it remarked, accord admirably one with another. It would be difficult to imagine a more undialectical mind.

Scepticism, however, is the essential characteristic of all Russell's philosophy, and is to be observed throughout his writings. It does not always appear openly. It usually lurks behind some truism about the general progress of human knowledge or the like. Sometimes it appears only as an under current of his pronouncements. This is particularly true of his more recent publications. Take one of his recent books, for example, one which has appeared lately in a German translation, *The Problem of China*, and open the first chapter. His scepticism here rises to complete despair of the civilisation of Western Europe. Were this all-pervading melancholy not that of an English gentleman, its effect would almost be dramatic.[3] In his pamphlet *Free Thought and Official Propaganda*, his scepticism emerges without the usual English fig-leaf. He says: "William James used to preach the 'will to believe.' For my part I should wish to preach the 'will to doubt.'" Naturally! The "modern" Guild-socialist

[2] He is described as "logistischer Axiomatiker," i.e. he looks upon mathematics simply as a construction upon the basis of axioms and logical principles. It is clear that this divorces mathematics from human experience, and is a *subjectivist* tendency.—Tr.

[3] It may be stated that Russell's book on China is full of the most foolish fairy tales about the history of China, and serves to introduce us less to modern China than to the pedantic workings of the author's mind. It also goes without saying that he provides us with a considerable dose of John Bull hypocrisy.

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with his " freedom of thought and freedom of the individual," the new shame-faced apostle of Manchester-Liberalism, cannot now, as a member of the Labour Party, allow himself such " freedom of thought and personality " as does his philosophical colleague William James, who with true American audacity applauds the traditions of the priest-ridden middle-ages. Mr. Russell is not so primitive. He is a gentleman, and for the present keeps his liking for the good God to himself.

We have no doubt that he waxed very indignant at the " monkey-trial " which took place recently in the United States, and the anti-Darwin propaganda which it occasioned. If he did not, he would be a poor apostle of the famous watchword of Mrs. Snowden—" For future children and humanity." And everybody knows that he is a most assiduous propagandist for this essentially British slogan. But it is no personal concern of our professor's that his friend, MacDonald, openly brandishes the Bible and gives his blessing to the International Church Congress at Stockholm. For must not the right of propaganda extend to the churches also, in the name of " Freedom of Thought " ? The only little thing that might have disturbed him would have been the too obvious indiscretion and too noisy behaviour of His Majesty's Master of Ceremonies who, by his reverence for the heads of the church, rather too frankly gave away the inmost secret wishes of his Party comrades.

The social-political[4] and philosophical scepticism of Russell is naturally reflected, in spite of some unconvincing compliments to exact research, in his attitude to mathematics and physics. As, for example, when he makes, in reference to mathematics, the *general* statement : " It is the science in which one does not know what one is talking about, nor whether what one says is true."

In what follows we shall concern ourselves with Russell as a physicist, and with this object we shall cast a glance at his most

[4] In his *The Practice and Theory of Bolshevism* (London, 1920. p. 121) his Olympian anger at the definiteness of the revolutionary Marxist outlook is expressed in the following outburst : " The dogmatic character of Marxian Communism finds support in the supposed philosophic basis of the doctrine ; it has the fixed certainty of Catholic theology, not the changing fluidity and sceptical practicality of modern science." We shall see, at the end of our discussion on Russell's present book, whither " the sceptical practicality of modern science " leads.

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recent book *The A B C of Atoms*. This purports to be an introduction to the modern theory of the atom, but is in fact much more, for it treats in general of the whole basis of modern physics. The importance of Russell as a scientist on the one hand, and on the other, certain positive achievements of this book, which distinguish it from his other writings, and finally the great popularity which the book enjoys, not merely in England but in Germany and probably other European countries, compel us to discuss it fairly thoroughly.

The well-known English physicist and populariser, Sir Oliver Lodge, describes the book as "an initial introduction of clearness and insight." We agree. Russell's exposition is actually extremely clear and ingenious in dealing with complicated matters. It treats the problems of modern atomic physics with what is, for a popular book of a hundred-odd pages, amazing scientific thoroughness. The diction is excellent, the style of a vivacity which compels the reader to finish the book at one sitting. In this particular, our German popularisers can still learn much from Russell. In spite of many objections which we have to bring against points of detail, and especially against the whole outlook of the author, we can recommend any worker to read this very well-produced book, at least, when he has a sound grounding in Marxism. Russell's exposition has many merits, but it contains a series of conceptions which call for vigorous criticism from the point of view of dialectical materialism.

To begin with the merits: the chief, in our view, are the following:—

(1) The book, standing as it were at the pinnacle of the most modern results of physical research, gives in a small space an extremely clear idea of the principal problems and methods of investigation into the structure of atoms. Russell understands how not to lose himself in details, but to bring the reader again and again to an examination of fundamental relations. The book teaches one to think.

(2) Russell never becomes superficial, but yet expounds the complicated questions of one of the most highly developed parts of physics clearly, easily, and gracefully.

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(3) He describes not only the results obtained, but points out again and again the gaps still existing in atomic physics and the difficulties still to be overcome.

(4) *His development of the subject shows very clearly the weaknesses and the uncertainty in the theoretical thinking of modern physicists*, as soon as it is a question of drawing epistemological[5] conclusions from the empirically established regularities. In this book are reflected certain aspects of that crisis which in the last two decades has overtaken not only the theory of atomic structure, but the basis of the whole of physics.[6]

On the fourth point, particularly typical, as showing the confusion in the minds of many physicists as a result of current developments, is the following passage (p. 150):—

> It must be confessed that the quantum theory in its modern form is far more astonishing and bewildering than in its older form. It might have seemed odd that energy should exist in little indivisible parcels, but at any rate it was an idea that could be grasped. But in the modern form of the principle, nothing is said, in the first instance, about what is going on at a given moment, or about atoms of energy existing at all times, but only about the total result of a process that takes time. Every periodic process arranges itself so as to have achieved a certain amount by the time one period is completed. *This seems to show that nature has a kind of foresight, and also knows the integral calculus*, without which it is impossible to know how fast to go at each instant so as to achieve a certain result in the end. (An extraordinary statement! Such anthropomorphism means nothing else than the resurrection of long buried ideas, *vis vitalis* or *visus formativus*, and their application to physics. How is this conception of Russell's different from the mediæval notion that nature "abhors a vacuum." It "seems to show" us that in the face of axioms and integrals the great mathematician has lost his head.—M.L.) All this sounds improbable. (See the *katzenjammer* already beginning.—M.L.) No doubt the fact is that the principle has assumed a complicated form because it has forced its way through, owing to experimental evidence, in a science built upon totally different notions.[7] The revolution in physical notions introduced by Einstein has as yet by no means produced its full effect. When it has, it is probable that the quantum principle will take on some simple and easily intelligible form.

[5] Epistemology: the philosophical theory of knowledge.

[6] A number of quotations are then given, with the object of illustrating these points. We are obliged to omit almost all of these to save space.—Tr.

[7] This statement is criticised later.—M.L.

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(It seems to us rather that this would be stated more correctly the other way round, namely: in the measure in which the revolution which the *quantum principle* has produced in physics is completed, many of the solutions to fundamental problems of mechanics and electrodynamics, provided by the relativity theory, but still clothed in an extremely complicated form and difficult to verify experimentally, assume a simple and more obvious character.—M.L.) But it will only be easily intelligible to those who have gone through the labour of learning to think in terms of modern physical notions rather than in terms of the notions derived from common sense and embodied in traditional physics. (To call the physics of Hamilton, Maxwell, Helenholtz, Lord Kelvin, Hertz, Boltzmann, Gibbs, &c., a "physics of common sense," is of course ridiculous, apart from the fact that the opposition of science to common sense is scientifically untenable. The conception of common sense is ambiguous, but involves in no way the idea of a limitation of human thought, or a condemnation of it.—M.L.)

This quotation gives us a good idea of one aspect of the crisis which modern physics is passing through. Only it must not be forgotten that this crisis has not brought about merely harmful results—a reaction towards idealistic, or even sometimes mystical modes of thought—but that it produces also extraordinary, really revolutionary effects, in the direction of a dialectical-materialist solution of the problems of natural science.[8]

We turn now to consider those views expressed in Russell's book which from the standpoint of a thorough and logical materialism, of Marxism, demand a decided answer. We have already pointed out that Russell is not merely a "modern" man, but is also definitely a sceptic. To-day this means, among other things that one denies the existence of an æther. We shall not say that any "modern" physicist must of necessity deny the existence of an æther. There are, indeed, many researchers, and among them some of the greatest names, who defend the idea of an æther tooth and nail. But a sceptic can, of course, have nothing to do with an æther, since the greatest difficulties still prevent any unified theoretical conception or practical treatment of the subject. It is obvious, however, that to acknowledge that fact does not involve, as with the philosophers, the "logical" or "epistemological" abolition of the conception of æther. The philosophers,

[8] Before proceeding with general criticism, several detailed and somewhat technical points are dealt with which we are unfortunately obliged to omit.

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of course, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred begin with such a threadbare argument as the attempt to deny real objective existence to the smallest material particles, molecules, atoms, and electrons. But Russell, for his part, appeals neither to "logic" and his theory of knowledge, nor to experience, but simply to "the will to doubt," probably with the cunning idea that against doubt as such, doubt in itself, this fundamental doubt, no opposition will be made, so that he will not have to supply any arguments. He renounces the æther and neatly gets rid of the whole trouble, as follows (p. 49):—

> People have invented a medium, the æther, for the express purpose of transmitting light-waves. But all we really know is that the waves are transmitted; *the æther is purely hypothetical, and does not really add anything to our knowledge.* We know the mathematical properties of light-waves, and the sensations they produce when they reach the human eye, but we do not know what it is that undulates. *We only suppose that something must undulate because we find it difficult to imagine waves otherwise* (our italics: M.L.)

A brilliant argument, indeed, for "the greatest living philosopher"! It has three weaknesses however. First, a medium was not "invented," rather have we been forced towards the acceptance of such an idea by the whole development of our conceptions of the inter-relations of space, time, and matter. The nature of this logical compulsion does not differ in fundamentals from that which forced us to accept the evolution of organisms. Second, that the æther is hypothetical says nothing against it, unless one advocates the complete abandonment of hypotheses, as Wilhelm Ostwald does, so persuasively, but with such doubtful results. A science without hypotheses is inconceivable. What is objectionable from the point of view of sound research is not hypothesis as such, but metaphysical speculation, smuggling itself into science under that name. There are hypotheses and hypotheses. Third, Russell, himself, explains that without the assumption of a "something" which undulates, "we find it difficult to imagine waves." But this "something" is precisely what we mean by "æther" though we are not at the moment able to give its properties more exactly.

Further, while we are thus being informed that the æther is "purely hypothetical," and "does not add anything to our

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knowledge," Russell suddenly gives us a whole theory of the æther (p. 152):—

> The æther, which used to play a great part in physics, has sunk into the background, and has become as shadowy as Mrs. Harris. *It may be found, however, as a result of further research, that the æther is after all what is really fundamental, and that electrons and hydrogen nuclei are merely states of strain in the æther, or something of the sort.* (Very fine, but how then does it "really add nothing to our knowledge?"—M.L.) If so, the two "elements" with which modern physics operates may be reduced to one, and the atomic character of matter may turn out to be not the ultimate truth. (This conclusion is unsound. The extension of our knowledge of the structure of the æther will in no way disturb principles based on the study of atoms, but will simply bring them into accord with the more general principles of physics derived from the study of the æther. The laws of molecular motion, for example those established by Einstein, Smoluchowski and Perrin for the Brownian movement, have not been upset by atomic physics, as the laws in question are of a higher order, and concern phenomena showing new properties, dealing as they do with molecules as opposed to atoms. This is true further for molecular physics, for astronomy, &c.—M.L.) This suggestion is purely speculative; there is nothing in the existing state of physics to justify it. *But the past history of science shows that it should be borne in mind as a possibility to be tested hereafter.* (Again we ask, how then does it "really add nothing to our knowledge?"—M.L.) If the possibility should be realised it would not mean that the present theory is false. (What theory? That of an æther, which, like Einstein's, has neither mass nor the possibility of motion?—M.L.); it would merely mean that a new interpretation had to be found for its results. Our imagination is so incurably (!: M.L.) concrete and pictorial that we have to express scientific laws, as soon as we depart from the language of mathematics, in language which asserts much more than we mean to assert. We (who?: M.L.) speak of an electron as if it were a little hard lump of matter, but no physicist really means to assert that it is. We speak of it as if it had a certain size (we have seen that *in fact* and not "as if" it has a definite magnitude—M.L.) but that also is more than we really mean. It may be something more analagous to a noise, which is spread throughout a certain region, but with diminishing intensity as we travel away from the source of the noise. (Try to explain this to your colleagues Planck, Einstein, Rutherford or Millekan!—M.L.). So it is possible that an electron is a certain kind of disturbance in the æther, most intense at one spot, but diminishing very rapidly in intensity *as we move away from this spot.* (This means no more and no less than mixing up physics and physiology into a Mach[9]-ian mud-pie, and the removal of that

[9] Mach, a *German* philosopher who endeavoured to found his system upon the basis of pure sense-data.—Tr.

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separation between the physical and sense-physiology which physics has to thank for its success up to the present. From such a crime against objective investigation it is only one step to the identification of all real existents with "experience-complexes"; from that the third step, as everyone knows, is to solipsism.[10]—M.L.)

If a disturbance of this sort could be discovered which would move and change as the electron does, and have the same amount of energy as the electron has, and have periodic changes of the same frequency as those of the electron, physics could regard it as what the electron really is without contradicting anything that present-day physics means to assert. And, of course, it is equally possible that a hydrogen nucleus may come to be explained in a similar way. All this is, however, but a speculative possibility; (How nice! Kelvin, Helenholtz, Hertz, Lorentz, J. J. Thomson, Stokes, &c., are mere speculators ?—M.L.) there is not as yet any evidence making it either probable or improbable. The only thing that is probable is that there will be such evidence, one way or other, before many years have passed. (Our italics throughout—M.L.)

Thus the conclusion, to which Russell's wisdom comes is that æther, may well, from a "pure speculation" or "pure hypothesis" (these conceptions are identical to him!), become a fruitful theory, founded upon experience.

(*To be concluded*)

[10] The theory according to which the only reality is one's individual consciousness.

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The World of Labour

NORWAY

Trade Union and Labour Movement

Norwegian Trade Unions

THE Norwegian Trade Union and Labour Movement has been for some time outside both the reformist and the revolutionary Internationals, but a determined effort has been made recently by the reformist International to draw it in.

In 1925 the Norwegian Trade Union Congress decided unanimously not to affiliate to either of the Internationals, but to establish direct contact with the Anglo-Russian Committee, and to demand the calling of a world unity congress in order to create one Trade Union International. At the beginning of December, 1926, a Scandinavian-Baltic Trade Union Conference was held. This had been called by the Swedish Trade Union Centre and by Oudegeest for the I.F.T.U. The purpose of this Conference was ostensibly to unite the workers for the class struggle, but really to draw the Norwegian Trade Unions into the I.F.T.U. This is shown by the fact that the questions of struggle against the White Terror and against the Fascists, which are so vital for the Baltic Trade Unions, and the question of national and international Trade Union unity were to be discussed only if the Conference had time.

The chief decision of the Conference was that the three Trade Union Centres of Sweden, Denmark and Norway should set up a Joint Committee with three delegates from each country. This Committee would unify the Scandinavian Trade Union Movement, organise financial aid, and during a struggle direct the publicity work and the Trade Union Press. But the condition for the functioning of this Committee was that the Norwegians should affiliate to the Amsterdam International. The I.F.T.U. count on the Norwegian need for help from the other two countries to induce them to affiliate to Amsterdam. At a meeting of the Norwegian General Council on December 16 and 17 it was decided to instruct the Executive Committee of the National Centre "to re-examine the question of the international relations of the Norwegian Centre, and to submit to the General Council a report, on the basis of which the Executive is again to take a decision in this matter, and to submit the question to the members for decision." The Executive decided to wait until the end of the wage negotiations, and probable lock-out, before laying the matter before the members.

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The R.I.L.U. have put before the Executive of the Norwegian Centre a proposal for the establishment of a Norwegian-Finnish-Russian Trade Union Committee. The purpose of the Committee would be, among other things, to " fight for international Trade Union unity, and reciprocal financial assistance in strikes, lock-outs, and other social conflicts."

The Unification Congresses

The Norwegian Labour Party seceded from the Communist International in 1925 under the leadership of Tranmael, but for some time it still stood for the class struggle and for the dictatorship of the proletariat, and was not linked up with the Labour and Socialist International. This party has now been united with the Socialist Party.

On January 30 a Unification Congress was held. This was called by the " Twelve," consisting of Tranmael for the Labour Party, the leaders of the Socialist Party and a few Trade Union officials. The attitude of the Communist Party to this Congress was at first undecided. Two extreme proposals were put forward by certain members, the first that the party should liquidate itself in favour of the new party, and the second that the party should boycott the Congress. Both these proposed tactics were abandoned for the policy that the party should take part in elections to the Congress and try to get a real working-class party established. But the conveners of the Congress tried to prevent this by making every delegate accept certain conditions—such as acceptance of the opportunist programme, dissolution of all political organisations, &c. Many organisations refused to accept these conditions, with the result that 400 " free " delegates were elected. These delegates were refused admission to the Congress, and finally held a Labour Congress of their own.

The Unification Congress, of delegates who had accepted the conditions laid down by the conveners, was attended by 870 delegates, representing 56,000 workers, 461 from the Labour Party, 175 from the Socialist Party, and 247 from Trade Unions. This Congress formed a united Labour Party. The chief difficulty at the Congress was in allotting the offices in the new party so as to satisfy both of the old parties. Finally it was decided that Tranmael (Labour Party) should edit the chief party organ, that Oskvik (Socialist) should be secretary, that the former presidents of the two parties, Torp and Magnus Nilssen, should be joint presidents, and that Edward Bull (Labour Party) should be deputy president. Regret was expressed by the Socialist Party at having to sever its connection with the Labour and Socialist International, but it was hoped that the new party would soon affiliate as a whole.

The Labour Congress, of the 400 excluded delegates, consisted of 250 Trade Union delegates and 150 Communist Party delegates, representing 30,000 workers. They founded the " Collective Party of the Working Class," which will now include the Communist Party and all Trade Unions with Left tendencies. The Congress discussed the question of unemployment, of a moratorium for poor peasants, and of action against capitalist militarism, against intervention in Russia, and in support of the Chinese Revolution. This party represents chiefly the large industrial centres, while the United Labour Party represents especially the workers of the capital.

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BOOK REVIEWS

THE AIMS OF CHINESE NATIONALISM

China and the Nations. By Wong Ching-wai. Translated and edited by I-sen Ting and John Nind Smith. (Martin Hopkinson, 7s. 6d.)

ONE turns with relief from a dreary mass of rubbish about China in newspapers, periodicals and books to a work which is at once authoritative, live, and amazingly to the point.

China and the Nations is indeed the most authoritative statement yet available of the Kuomintang policy towards the Imperialist Powers. For it is the report prepared by Wong Ching-wai on International Problems for the People's Conference of Delegates which was to meet at Peking in 1925, and which may meet there this summer—in what altered circumstances—if all goes well, and Chang Tso-lin shares the fate of Wu-pei-fu and Sun Chuan-fang and Chang Tsung-chang.

Wong himself—though he has been less in the limelight than some of his colleagues and is indeed scarcely known to glib newspapermen who have learned to prattle of Chen and Chiang and to talk nonsense about the internal affairs of the Kuomintang—is probably the biggest figure in the Nationalist Movement since Sun's death. He has been chairman of the Governing Committee of the Canton Government. He heads the list of the newly-elected Standing Committee of the Party. He is likely to be President of the Republic when the war is finished and the building of the new Chinese State begins.

And—as the reader will soon guess—he has some reputation not only as an orator but as an author. For this report, concise and businesslike as it is, is a little masterpiece of political literature. It tells the history of China's relations with the Western Powers, it analyses the existing situation, it lays down a policy with a firmness of tone and an economy of expression that are beyond praise. The essential facts are marshalled to tell their own damning story. The comments are incisive, the aphorisms have the Nietzschean touch.

> Obtain the consent of the Imperialists to abolish the unequal treaties? Wait for the river to lose its mud.
>
> What is International Law? It is an instrument for securing the privileges obtained from the weak by the powerful nations. The powerful nation has already used force or blackmail to obtain the privileges. It uses international law to secure them. A wolf and a lamb talking justice.
>
> Robbers and cutpurses always band together if they mean to be brigands. (Hence the precedent of " Equal Opportunity and Privileges " was invented by the Imperialists).

Such comments as these run through the story of plunder and humiliation which Western statesmen so blandly forget but which the Chinese so bitterly remember—that story not only of shameless robbery but of insolence and insult which explains so much that Sir Austen and his like can only attribute to the magical incantations of the Red Hand.

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That story—of the clear-sighted understanding of its economic significance—is the key to the policy in which a superficial stupidity can see nothing but "xenophobia," thinking, after the manner of the stupid, that a Greek name is an adequate explanation of any phenomenon.

"Imperialism is the enemy" is Wong's thesis. "Triumph over Imperialism is the root of roots." It is the first condition for the crushing of internal militarism, for financial reform, for industrial development, for political improvement, for everything. It is the "root of roots." And Wong is a radical.

He does not, like the sentimental Nationalist or the bourgeois-national place hunter, visualise Imperialism merely as a political domination, a foreign engrossment of jobs which might be filled to their own advantage by native politicians.

> Modern Imperialism has for its object economic invasion. The promotion of political ascendancy is designed to protect the economic invasion. *Military power is both pioneer and reserve force in the struggle for political* ascendancy.
>
> Or again: Imperialism is the utilisation by any people of its political and military ascendancy for subjecting to its economic encroachment some foreign country or territory or race.

Imperialism—not "foreigners"—is the enemy. "The People's Revolution is antagonistic not to the foreigners but only to Imperialism."

"The people, in every country, have the idea of crushing Imperialism, but less strongly than the Chinese. Could the Chinese people co-operate with them in this work they would welcome it gladly. For the destruction of Imperialism would benefit not only the Chinese people, but equally the peoples of all the world."

But why go on quoting? *China and the Nations* is a book which is, in the jargon of the professors, an "essential document." If you want to understand the Chinese movement you have got to read it. And that, after all, is all that a reviewer need say.

W. N. E.

THE WHITE GUARDS' REPLY

La Russie sous la Régime Communiste. Edited by Michel Feodoroff. A Reply to the Report of the British Trade Union Delegation, based on Official Soviet Documents. (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Nationale, 30 fr.)

ONE interesting thing about this book, *Russia Under the Communist Régime*, is that it is compiled by men who belong to the old Tsarist régime and who were very active in the civil war, on the side, of course, of the White Guards. One need only mention Kokovtsoff, who was the Tsar's Minister of Finance, and Gourko, who was considered to be among the reactionaries even in the Russian Tsarist bureaucracy. The main editor of the book is Dr. Feodoroff, also an old Minister of the Tsar and a very active member among the Russian Whites who are still dreaming of restoring Tsardom. Many of the authors of the book were very active in the last Congress of the White Guards, which had for its purpose the proclamation of the Grand Duke Nicholas as the Russian Tsar.

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A second interesting feature of the book is that it is presented to the French people by Hubert Bourgin, an active French Fascist. Thus the book can be considered as the creation of a Fascist reactionary coalition of different nations.

The Tsar's Minister and the French Fascists are very glad to be in the company of Mr. F. Adler, the Secretary of the Second International, in the common vote against the delegation of the T.U.C. General Council. They quote with pleasure (p. 54) the pronouncement of Mr. Adler that the delegation "compromised the honour of the working-class movement."

Notwithstanding the fact that all the stars of the old Russian régime worked several months to prepare this reply to the Report of the T.U. Delegation, the book itself contains all kinds of accusations against the Soviets which are very often in the greatest contradiction to one another. Furthermore, the same writer very often makes contradictory accusations against the Soviet régime; for instance, Peter Struve, who was the chairman of the above-mentioned Congress of the White Guards. Peter Struve took upon himself the writing of the general introduction to the book. On page 7 he says that the Russian Revolution was a violent reaction which brings us back to the economic barbarity of the Middle Ages. On the same page this writer tells us that, after the Revolution, Russia was thrown back in some respects to the end of the eighteenth century, and in others to the beginning of the nineteenth century. Thus we know that, according to Struve, the Russian Revolution threw the country back either to the Middle Ages or to the eighteenth century. It appears that when Mr. Struve came to the end of his introduction, he forgot all he said on the seventh page, and he makes the following declaration :—

> Far from having established Socialism in Russia Lenin prepared the basis for a renaissance in the ideas as well as in facts of a bourgeois régime and ideology such as history has not yet known.

Now compare the statement made on p. 7 with the statement just quoted (p. 15) and you will come to the conclusion that the man who took upon himself to introduce the book to the reader does not himself know what was the idea of the Russian Revolution.

All the contributors are, of course, very scornful when they deal with the Report of the T.U. Delegation and its authors. Again and again they repeat that these men—the authors of the T.U. Report—do not know Russia enough, and so on. The authors of the reply know Russia very well. Still more, they played a big part in the destinies of that country. Still, they do not say a word as to why and how they, the rulers of old Russia, lost their influence and were compelled to fly from the country which they kept in their hands for decades and decades. It is quite obvious that this is the problem which matters. It is not enough to write a book against those who have given an honest picture of conditions under the Soviets. The authors of the book had full power to fight Soviet ideas and the defenders of the Soviets. Why did they lose? But there is not a word about this problem in this book, which comprises 571 pages.

The funniest thing about the book is that it contains many facts which are absolutely correct. Their greatest indictment against the Soviets is that

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this system shows preference to the workers. That is the thing which they cannot tolerate. A very loyal man, Professor Timacheff, goes so far as to say that the very fact that the Soviet Government draws a clear line between workers and non-workers makes Soviet Russia a state divided into castes (p. 36). Well, if we are not mistaken, the Report of the T.U. Delegation never denied that the working class is the ruling class under the Soviets, and that the Soviet system has for its object to practise and not only to preach preference for the workers.

There are two chapters in this book which deserve special attention. One is about the Comintern and the other about Soviet militarism. The authors of the book try their very best to serve the international reaction. They have heard of some accusations concerning the relations between the Comintern and the Soviet Government. They are very anxious to substantiate these accusations. Unfortunately for them they do not exactly know the aims of Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sir William Joynson-Hicks. In order to prove that the Soviet Government and the Communist International are the same thing they advance the following theory:—

(i) The dictatorship of the Russian C.P. exists in the Soviet Union.

(ii) The Russian C.P. is a part of the Communist International as a member and as a subordinate organ.

(iii) The Communist International is the chief master of the destinies of Russia, which it governs through the medium of the Russian C.P. (p. 40).

Poor professors! Chamberlain and Joynson-Hicks are trying their very best to prove that the C.I. is governed by the Soviet Government. Now these learned professors, only anxious to help Chamberlain, are proving that the C.I. is ruling Russia. Which means that Russia is ruled, not only by the Russian workers, but by English workers, German workers, French workers, and others, who, together with the Russian Party—in the book it is stated clearly that the Russian Party is a subordinate part of the Comintern—form the C.I. This is quite a different thing. If the authors of the book are correct, then Soviet Russia cannot be blamed for the actions of the C.I., but the British, French, German, and other workers should be blamed for the mistakes or for the achievements of Soviet Russia.

Still more amazing is the chapter on militarism. It is called the "Militarisation of the U.S.S.R." The chapter begins with a pathetic announcement that the Bolsheviks seized power with the slogans: "Down with war!" and "Down with the military!" Then the author of this chapter (by the way, he is afraid to give his name; all we know is that he is an officer of the General Staff of the Imperial Russian Army) continues that many Socialists have written apologetic books about the militia. He knows that the army of the U.S.S.R. consists only of 562,000 men (p. 79), which is about one-third of the old Russian Tsarist army. He also knows that the Soviet Union is passing little by little to the militia system. Still he writes a long chapter on militarism. Where do you think he finds that famous militarism? He finds it in a speech by the late People's Commissar for War, M. V. Frunze, who stated that while Russia is surrounded by capitalist Governments it should always be prepared to resist an attack. Of course we understand that the authors of this book, who are very anxious to restore Tsardom and to

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crown the uncle of the late Tsar, would prefer that Russia should not be ready to resist an attack. Well and good. But honest men have no right to speak about a country which cut down its army to one-third of its previous size, and which is continuing to cut it down, as a militarist country.

The book itself is divided into two parts. The first part deals with general conditions. The second part deals specially with economic conditions. The second part is the biggest. The most interesting feature about the second part is that the authors make a point of emphasising the damages which the country suffered as a result of so-called war Communism. They pretend not to know that war Communism was chiefly a measure of defence against the same authors, who were at that time not so busy writing books, but in organising the active armed counter-revolution with the help of the international bourgeoisie. If someone is to be blamed for all the sufferings endured by the Russian people, for all the tragedies at the time of the civil war, there is no doubt that the authors of this book are the first to be blamed. The most interesting thing is that, apart from several critical remarks against the authors of the T.U. Delegation Report, they do not deny, and they cannot deny, the facts and figures of the Report.

There are very many groups of people in all countries who dislike the Report of the T.U. Delegation. But the only group to take upon itself the task of preparing a full reply (we do not speak of Friedrich Adler, who preferred to abuse the Report instead of answering it point by point) was a group of the old rulers of Russia. This fact shows that the authors of the Trade Union Report understood the situation sufficiently well. They preferred to line up with the workers and the peasants in their efforts and in their achievements in the fight against those who were defeated by the victorious revolution. To answer the reply would mean to criticise the Tsarist and capitalist regimes. The working-class movement has many occasions to do this on the basis of everyday life. This book deserves attention only because it shows who are on the side of the Soviet—the British workers, as well as the workers of many other countries—and who are against the Soviets—Russian White Guards, French Fascists, and reactionaries of many other countries. The Report of the T.U. Delegation on the one hand and the reply on the other are quite a good illustration of the two sides in this struggle. That is the most important thing about the book.

P B.

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